WHAT IS ISLAM

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ISLAM KIYA HAI?

اِسلام کیا ہے؟

Translated by

MOHAMMAD ASIF KIDWAI

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Maulana Mohammad Manzoor Nomani
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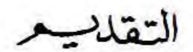


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المحتويات

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Preface

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST BENEVOLENT, THE MOST MERCIFUL

Should it be possible for the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) to be sent down into the world once again by Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) what would his reaction be on seeing the conduct and behaviour and the general design of life of the community that exists today by the name of Muslim? And what advice and command would he give to such of his followers who still possess in their hearts some solicitude for the faith and whose souls have not yet frozen to and got completely bereft of devotion and allegiance to Islam?

Without the least hesitation, I can say that he will feel extreme pain at the spectacle of utter moral and spiritual degeneration in the bulk of Muslims present these days, as much as he was by the brutal treatment meted out to him by the people of Taif or by the savage assaults made by the callous Polytheists at Uhad. And his message to earnest concern for faith will be to dedicate themselves whole-heartedly to the task of improving and reforming the lamentable religious state of his Ummah and of breathing into it again the spirit of Faith and Islamic way of life.

So, if you find yourself in agreement with me and your heart concurs with what I have said above, you must resolve, here and now, and in all sincerity, to make this endeavour a part of your life. For my part, I am absolutely confident that it is the choicest way to earn the pleasure of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and the blessings of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) and to make his soul happy.

By the grace of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) efforts of the moral and religious revival of Muslims are being made on a fairly large scale in India and Pakistan and in several other countries, also in the

form of a movement called Tabligh. Wherever you may be living you can take part in these efforts, according to your means and circumstances, alongwith other earnest sons of Islam of your place and also do what you can individually in this respect.

This small book which is now in your hands is a part of this endeavour. It has been written specially to meet the needs of Muslim men and women who do not know much about Islam or who cannot avail themselves of more advanced books on it. They can read it themselves or have it read out to them by others and also communicate its contents to their brethren by reading the book publicly in mosques and at other Muslim congregations, and thus, do their bit towards their own religious correction and reform as well as that of others.

Though the book consists only of about two hundred pages, (urdu version) the sum and substance of the Faith has been covered fully in it. Within its twenty lessons all those teachings of the Holy Quraan and the Traditions have been compressed by knowing which and by acting on which a common man can not only become a good Muslim but a perfect man of faith and a "friend" of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) also. Besides, it can be freely presented to those non-Muslims who may be interested in knowing about Islam and its precepts.

The humble author could only produce the book which he has done. Now, to make it serve the purpose, in a worth while manner, for which it has been written depends solely on your choice and cooperation. Had his financial resources permited, the author would have got it printed in millions and sent a copy of it, free of cost, to every educated Muslim in India. The conditions now prevailing in India, particularly, cry out for it. But, from the beginning, it has been the Will of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) that those who cherish such aspirations seldom have the means to realise them and, without a doubt, there lies great wisdom of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) in it also.

Be it as may, it is beyond the power of the writer of this book to fulfil his desire. But, if Muslims in whose hands the book may reach

decide, in their eagerness to propitiate Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and give happiness to the soul of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) and to earn for themselves a bountiful reward in the Hereafter, to make it available, or its contents, to as many of their brethren as possible, the real aim of its writing and publication would be fulfilled to a good extent.

As it has been indicated already, in the new context of things in India the religous future of Muslims rests apparently on the sole condition that every follower of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) here who is aware of the importance of the Faith and knows what it means should make it a personal duty to strive for the Islamic regeneration of the general body of Muslims and a missions of his life to carry the message of Faith and the teachings of Islam to each and every member of his community.

Mohammad Manzoor Nomani
(Rehmatullah Alaih)

Lucknow.



Introduction

Brothers! you all will, perhaps, be aware that Islam is not the name of caste or community so that anyone who is born in it automatically becomes a Muslim without having to do anything on his own part about it, just as a child born in a Sheikh or a Syed family becomes a Sheikh or a Syed, as a matter of course, and there is nothing it can do in this regard.

Islam, on the other hand, is the name of that faith and that way of life which was brought into the world from Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) by His true and devoted Apostle, Prophet Mohammad (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam), and is preserved to this day in its pristine purity in the Holy Quraan and the Traditions. Thus, he alone can be called a Muslim who accepts that faith and practices that way of life. Those who are ignorant of the teachings of Islam, or do not act upon them are not genuine Muslims by any means. We, therefore, conclude, that two things are necessary for anyone to be a true Muslim:

Firstly, to acquire a proper knowledge of the teachings of Islam, or, at least, of its basic and fundamental doctrines.

And, secondly, to believe in these teachings as true and to resolve sincerely to live according to them.

This, in sum, is what Islam is. To acquire a knowledge of the tenets of Islam, i.e., of its essential teachings is the first requisite of being a Muslim. A Tradition of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) reads:

"To acquire knowledge of the faith is the duty of all Muslims."

It is necessary to bear permanently in the mind that to carry out

what is described in religion as a duty is an act of worship in Islam. To exert oneself for the sake of obtaining an adequate knowledge of the faith, hence, is also an act of worship in which there is a bountiful reward from Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa). The Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) has proclaimed great merit in it. Take these Traditions, for instance:

"He who goes forth in search of religious knowledge engages himself in the cause of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) until he returns."

"For him who goes out in search of religious knowledge Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) shall make easy the way to Heaven."

"Thirst for religious knowledge and the pursuit of it atones for one's previous sins."

In short, the cultivation of religious knowledge, i.e., the knowledge of the essential teachings of Islam is binding on all Muslims, rich and poor, educated and uneducated, male and female, old and young. From the Traditions of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) quoted above, we also learn that rich reward awaits us in the Hereafter for the time spent and the pains taken for the sake of it. Let us all, now, make up our minds that we will strive earnestly to equip ourselves with adequate knowledge of the faith and a proper understanding of the basic doctrines of Islam.

For Muslims who, on account of their age or preoccupation, cannot join a Muslim theological institution and take a regular course of Islamic religious instruction, the best thing will be that, if they are educated, they should develop the habit of reading reliable books on Islam regularly, and, if they are not or only nominally literate, they should have such books read out to them by others who can read and understand. If the custom of reading religious books, individually or in groups, can become common in Muslim homes, mosques and at their other gatherings, the spread of religious knowledge to all classes and

sections of the community will be greatly facilitated indeed.

This small book has been written solely to fulfil this purpose. All the necessary information regarding Islam and the teachings of the sacred Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) which a Muslim ought to possess has been furnished in it in a simple language. Let us all learn these truths and precepts personally and impart them to others as well and make it a mission of our lives to popularise them throughout the world. A Tradition of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) says:

"If a person engages himself in the pursuit of Islamic religious knowledge with the object of reviving the faith through it (i.e., by instructing it to others and bringing them round to act on it) and he dies in the process, his place will be so very close to the Prophets in the Hereafter that there will be only a difference of one degree between them and him."

May Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) grant us the great good fortune of learning the precepts of Islam and teaching them to others, and of acting on them and endeavouring sincerely to persuade others to do the same.

<u>*Lesson 1*</u> كلمة التوحيد

The Holy Kalimah

لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَّسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ

THERE IS NO GOD (NO ONE IS WORTHY OF WORSHIP AND OBEDIENCE) BUT ALLAH (SUBHAANAHU WATA'AALAA) AND MUHAMMAD (SALLALLAHU ALAIHE WASALLAM) IS HIS APOSTLE.

Brothers! This confession is the gateway to Islam, the arch-stone of the faith. By affirming it and reciting it with sincerity and conviction even a life-long heathen or a polytheist can become a Muslim, a man of faith, and earn his title to salvation. The condition, however, is that he should have accepted conscientiously and with full understanding of the declaration of the Oneness of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and the Apostleship of Prophet Mohammad (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) contained in it. Thus, any one who repeats the confession mechanically, without understanding it and without knowing what the concepts of Divine Unity and Apostleship and Prophethood means, will not gain recognition in the sight of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) as a Muslim. It is therefore, necessary, to study its meaning and implications carefully.

The First Part

The confession consists of two parts. The first part لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ contains the affirmation of the Oneness of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa). It means that no one except Allah Almighty is worthy of worship and obedience. Worship and obedience should be offered to Him alone because He and no one else is our Lord and Creator, Nourisher and Sustainer and the Dispenser of Life and Death. Sickness and health, poverty and riches, in short, all manner of good and evil, gain or loss, lies solely in His control. Apart from Him, whatever living things exist on the earth, or in the heavens, be they men or angels, are all His creatures and slaves. He is partnered by no one, no one has a

share in His Divinity nor can any one amend or alter His Will, or interfere with His affairs. Hence, He and He alone is worthy of devotion and worship. He alone is the Supreme Being, the Almighty, to whom all our prayers and supplications should be addressed. He alone is the real Owner of the heavens and the earth, the Monarch of all monarchs, the Lord Sovereign. It is, therefore, necessary that all His commands and injunctions are strictly obeyed and faithfully carried out. As against His commands the commands of no one should be heeded to no matter whether they are of our parents or rulers or of the head of the community or a dear friend, or the biddings of our own heart. In a nutshell, when once we have realized and confessed the truth that Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) alone, and no one besides Him, is worthy of worship and obedience our conduct should also be in conformity with it, so much so that any one who sees us should know by our behaviour that we are the devoted servants of the Lord who carry out His commands dutifully and live and die for His sake alone.

Brothers! This لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ is the keystone of Islam and the first and foremost item in the teachings of all the Prophets. It occupies the highest and the most important place in the religious scheme of teachings. A famous Tradition of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) reads:

"There are more than seventy departments of the faith and among them the most superior and exalted is belief in the Kalimah of لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ

For this reason, among the Zikr[1] (specific phrase for Remembrance of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) also it is the best. States the Prophet:

"Of all the Zikr, the best and most excellent is that of لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ

In another Tradition, it is related that once Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) gave this reply to a question put to Him by Prophet

1. The word Zikr which occurs in the original literary means a special phrase meant for recitations by the devout for the remembrance of Allah - Translator.

Moses (Alaihis Salaam) :

> "O Moses! If the seven heavens and the seven earths and all that is contained in them, are placed on one side of the balance and لَا إِلٰهَ إِلَّا اللهُ on the other, the side on which لَا إِلٰهَ إِلَّا اللهُ is placed, will turn out to be heavier."

Brothers! This unique virtue and excellence is due solely to the fact that it contains the solemn affirmation of Divine Unity, the assertion, the pledge and the declaration that we shall worship Him alone and offer our homage and obeisance to no one apart from Him, and shall make Him the sole pivot of our existence. It, indeed, is the life-breath of Islam.

That is why, the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) has advised Muslims to refresh and to reinvigorate their faith by repeating the Kalimah frequently.

It is narrated that the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) once said, "O men! Keep on refreshing your faith". Upon this the Companion enquired, "O Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! How are we to do so?" The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) replied, "By reciting the Kalimah frequently."

The Kalimah of لَا إِلٰهَ إِلَّا اللهُ holds the power to restore and revitalise the faith for the simple reason that it embodies the affirmation of Divine Unity and the covenant to worship Him alone, to do allegiance to none beside Him and to hold Him dearer and nearer to the heart than anything or anybody else in the world. As we have said earlier, it is the essence, the sustaining principle of Islam. So, the more we will utter it attentively, concentrating duly on what it stands for, the more will our faith gain in vitality and our covenant in strength, and our whole life will, InshaaAllah, get cast in the mould of لَا إِلٰهَ إِلَّا اللهُ

The Second Part

The Second part of the Kalimah consists of مُحَمَّدٌ رَّسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ . In it the affirmation is made of the Divine Apostleship of Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam). Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) is the Apostle of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) means that he was raised up by the Almighty for the guidance of the world and whatever he taught, preached or revealed like the Divinity of the origin of the Holy Quraan, the existence of the angels, the certainty of the Last Day, the Resurrection, the Judgement, the award of heaven and hell according to one's deeds on the earth was hundred per cent true and authentic. Indeed, the Apostleship of the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) denotes nothing more and nothing less than this that all the things he taught to the world, all the truths he revealed to mankind, were based on Divine inspiration, that they were based on special and authoritative knowledge vouchsafe to him by Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), and so they were absolutely correct and beyond doubt. There is not the least excuse or the slightest reason, for doubting or questioning his word. The guidance he gave to men, the laws he laid down, were Divine guidance and Divince laws which had been inspired to him by the Almighty. You would have realised that the acceptance of any one as a Divine Apostle automatically implies that each and every precept and command of him should be whole-heartedly believed in and obeyed, for Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) raised up His Apostles in the world solely to convey through them to mankind the commands and precepts He wants to be followed. Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) says in the Holy Quraan.

وَمَآ اَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ رَّسُوْلٍ اِلَّا لِيُطَاعَ بِاِذْنِ اللّٰهِ (النساء ٦٤)

We sent not an Apostle, but to be obeyed in accordance with the Will of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) *(IV:G-64)*

To believe in anyone as an Apostle and to accept him as such, thus, means simply to hold every word of his as true, to regard his teachings and guidance to be the teachings and guidance of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), and to decide once for all, to lead one's life

according to the precepts he taught. So, if a person recites the Kalimah but does not, as a logical consequence of it, resolve firmly to hold all the teachings of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) to be wholly true and all that may run counter to them to be wholly false, and to abide by his Shariah (holy law) and his commands faithfully, he, of course is not a man of faith and a Muslim. He, probably, has not even understood what it means to be a Muslim.

It is obvious that once we have recited the Kalimah and accepted the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) as the true Apostle of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), it becomes obligatory for us to believe in his guidance, to adhere to his commands and to observe faithfully the Shariah he brought.

A Covenant

From the meaning and interpretation of the Holy Kalimah given above, you will have realised that it is a covenant. It embodies the pledge and the vow that we believe in Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) as the One and Only Lord, Sovereign, Master and Creator, and regard everything that exists in this world and the Hereafter to be exclusively in His control, and that, since we do so, we will worship Him alone and carry out His commands the way a servant and a slave carries out the commands of his master, and love Him and adore Him above all else, and further, that we accept Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) as the true Apostle of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), and will abide by his guidance as a loyal follower, and fashion our lives according to the holy law laid down by him. In fact, faith denotes nothing except this pldge and covenant and this is precisely what the affirmation of Divine Unity and Apostleship means.

A Muslim should, therefore, hold himself bound by this covenant and try his level best to shape his conduct in its light so that he may earn recognition in the eyes of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) as a genuine man of faith and attain his salvation and place in the paradise.

Those who are blessed enough to bear faith honestly in both the

parts of the holy Kalimah and to give proof of it by word as well as by deed are the recipients of countless glad tidings like the one reproduced below:

> It is related by Hadhrat Anas that the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) once said to Hadhrat Mo'aaz, "Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) has declared as forbidden the fire of the hell for him who affirms the Kalimah of لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَّسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ with a true heart"

Brothers! Affirm لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَّسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ with a true heart and with a full knowledge and awareness of its implications and importance and resolve now and forever to lead your lives according to it in order that your attestation may not turn out to be false. On this very attestation depends your faith and your salvation.



Lesson 2

Salaah

The first and most important duty in Islam after one has brought faith in Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and in Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) and borne witness to Divine Oneness and the Apostleship of the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) is Salaah (Prayers). It is a most special act of Divine worship which a Muslim is called upon to perform five times a day. There are numerous verses of the Holy Quraan and the Tradition of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) enjoining the Salaah on us. It has been described as the pillar and the foundation of the Islam.

Salaah, if it is offered with a sincere heart and proper devotion and mental concentration, is particularly vested with the property of cleansing the heart and reforming one's life and ridding it of sins and impurities. It generates love for piety and truth and promotes fear of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) in man. Thus it is that Islam haş laid greater emphasis on it than on all other religious obligations. When anyone came to the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) to embrace Islam, the first promise the sacred Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) took from him, after instructing him in Divine Oneness, was that he will offer the Salaah regularly. In fine, after the Kalimah, Salaah is the bedrock of Islam.

Traditions

We know from the Traditions that the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) used to equate neglect of the Salaah with infidelity. He denounced it as the way of the nonbelievers. He would say that those who did not offer the Salaah had no share in the faith.

A Tradition of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) reads,

"What separates a believer from infidelity is simply the Salaah."

This Tradition clearly warns that if a Muslim will give up the Salaah, he will get associated with infidelity; his conduct will become the conduct of an infidel. In another Tradion the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) has said, "He has no share in Islam who does not offer the Salaah."

And here is another Tradition from which we can imagine what a great act of virtue and felicity is it to offer the Salaah regularly and how utterly fatal and ruinous is it to neglect it. Once while urging upon the Muslims to be most particular about the Salaah, the sacred Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) is reported to have observed:

> "Whoever will offer the Salaah properly and regularly, it will be for him on the Last Day a source of light, a proof of his faith and a means to salvation. (On the other hand) whoever will not offer it carefully and regularly, it will be for him neither a source of light, nor a proof of faith, nor a means to salvation, and the end of such a person will be with Qaaroon [1]., Fir'aun [2], Haamaan [3] and Ubai-bin-Khalf [4]."

Brothers! Let us now imagine what our end is going to be if we failed to cultivate the habit of offering the Salaah correctly and regularly.

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1. Korah. Translator
2. Pharaoh. Translator
3. Name of Pharaoh's Minister .Translator
4. One of the bitterst enemies of the holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) in Makkah-Translator

The Ignominy and Disgrace of the Defaulters on the Last Day

The ignominy and disgrace the defaulters of Salaah will have to suffer at the very outset on the Day of Judgement has been spoken of in these words in the Holy Quraan:-

يَوْمَ يُكْشَفُ عَنْ سَاقٍ وَّيُدْعَوْنَ إِلَى السُّجُوْدِ فَلَا يَسْتَطِيْعُوْنَ ۙ خَاشِعَةً أَبْصَارُهُمْ تَرْهَقُهُمْ ذِلَّةٌ ۗ وَقَدْ كَانُوْا يُدْعَوْنَ إِلَى السُّجُوْدِ وَهُمْ سَالِمُوْنَ ۝ (القلم ٤٢)

The day that the shin shall be laid bare, and they shall be summoned to bow in adoration, but they shall not be able, their eyes will be cast down, ignominy will cover them, seeing that they had been summoned aforetime to bow in adoration while they were whole (and had refused). XI : 42

The verse tells that on the Last Day when the hour of judgement will arrive (when all mystery will vanish and reality will be fully manifested) and every man and woman born into the world from the first day to the last will be raised up again and gathered together, Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) will reveal Himself to them in full glory and splendour. Everyone will then be called upon to bow in adoration before Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa). The fortunate and the faithful among them who had been regular in their Salaah in the world and were, thus, accustomed to kneeling down before Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) will, at once, bow down in adoration, but those who in spite of being healthy and strong had not observed the Salaah in their lifetime will find that their backs had suddenly grown stiff like a board and they will remain standing with the infidels, unable to bend down and carry out the prostration. They will be covered with ignominy, their eyes will be downcast, they will not be able even to look up. Before the chastisement of hell, they will have to bear this chastisement of humiliation and disgrace. May Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), by His Grace, save us all from it!

In truth, a habitual defaulter of the Salaah is a sort of a rebel

against Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and deserves all the humiliation and punishment that may be meted out to him. According to some Jurisprudents of Islam, a Muslim who rejects the Salaah is liable to be punished with death like an apostate.

Brothers! We must consider it thoroughly and well that without the Salaah the claim to Islam is altogether meaningless. Salaah alone is the Islamic act that joins us with Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and makes us deserving of His grace.

Blessings of Salaah

When a person stands before the Almighty with his arms folded, five times a day, and celebrates His praises and kneels down before Him and touches the ground with his forehead and makes earnest supplications to Him, he becomes worthy of His love and beneficence, his sins are forgiven with every Salaah he offers, his heart attains enlightenment and his life becomes pure. The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) once gave an excellent example to illustrate this truth. He asked his Companions, " Tell me, if a stream flows at the door of anyone of you and he takes a dip in it five times a day. Will there be left any grime on his body?" The Companions replied, " No, Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam). No grime will be left on his body". The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) said, " It is exactly the same with the five daily prayers. Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) removes all impurities and sins because of their auspiciousness."

Superiority of Congregation

It appears from the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam)'s Traditions that Salaah should be offered in congregation if one wants to derive full benefit from it. The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) was so very particular about it that once while condemning the conduct of those who avoided coming to the mosque to offer their prayers in congregation due to laziness or indifference, he observed with anger that he felt like burning down their homes.

This one Tradition is enough to show how repugnant it is to Allah

(Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) if anyone does not offer his prayers in congregation. Another Tradition says :-

"The reward on offering the Salaah in congregation is twenty seven times as much as on offering it alone."

Apart from the reward in the Hereafter, there are many other advantages in offering up the Salaah in congregation. For instance, one acquires the habit of punctuality by attending the mosque regularly to offer his prayers in congregation[1]. It enables Muslim brethren of the locality to assemble at one place five times every day and this can be turned to great benefit. The practice of offering the Salaah regularly in the mosque congregationally makes a man thoroughly regular in his prayers for it has been seen that those who offer their prayers individually at home are often inclined to be neglectful. Yet another notable advantage in offering the prayers in congregation is that the Salaah of each participant becomes a part of the Salaah of the whole congregation in which, along with others, there are also generally present some venerable and virtuous servants of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) whose Salaah are of a very high order. Their Salaah finds acceptance with Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and the expectation from His Benevolent Grace is that when He will grant acceptance to the prayers of some members of the congregation. He will, along with them, accept the prayers of the rest of the congregation, too.

Now, imagine what rich rewards and blessing do we deprive ourselves of when do not go to the mosque to offer our prayers in congregation without a valid excuse.

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1. It should he noted that the superiority of offering up the Salaah in congregation is only for men. The Traditions say clearly that women earn greater reward on saying their prayers at home than in the mosque.

Meekness and Humility

The offering up of the Salaah with meekness and humility means that, believing Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) to be Omnipresent and All-Seeing, the Salaah should be offered in such a way that the heart is filled with His love and stricken with awe by the thought of His Greatness and Magnificence as if a criminal was standing in front of a great judge or a mighty ruler. As a devotee stands up for Salaah, he should visualise that he is standing in the presence of the Almighty that he is standing out of reverence to Him. When he bows his head in Ruku' [1] or kneels down to perform the Sajdah [2] he should imagine that it was all being carried out in front of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and in expression of his own utter worthlessness and humility. Better still, whatever is recited during Salaah, whether while standing or in Ruku' or Sajdah, should be done with a proper understanding of its meaning. The real joy and beauty of Salaah is experienced only when it is offered with an intelligent appreciation of its contents. It is not, at all, difficult to learn the meaning of the Surahs [3] that are generally recited in Salaah.

The devotion of the heart and the sentiments of awe and humility, indeed, are the very soul of the Salaah. The ultimate success and deliverance of believers who offer up such a kind of Salaah is assured. Declares the Holy Quraan :-

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ۙ الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خَاشِعُونَ ۙ (المؤمنون ١٤)

The believers must (eventually) succeed, those who humble themselves in their prayers. (XXIII-II)

Says the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam), "Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) has made the five daily prayers obligatory. Whoever did the Wudhu [4] properly and offered them up at the right time and carried out the Ruku' and Sajdah as they ought to be, humbly and reverentially, for him the promise of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) is that he will be pardoned; and whoever did not do so (i.e., did not offer his prayers in

1. Bowing low. - Translator
2. Prostration. - Translator
3. Chapters of the Holy Quraan.- Translator
4. Ablution performed before offering prayers.-Translator

this manner), for him there is no such promise. Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) will pardon or punish him as He will please."

Method

When it is the time for prayer, we should perform the Wudhu thoroughly, believing that this washing and cleansing was necessary before we presented ourselves before the Lord and worshipped Him. The Almighty, in His benevolence, has invested the Wudhu with great auspiciousness. The sins and transgressions of the parts of the body that are washed during it, are forgiven because of it. The unholy effects of sins are, so to speak, washed away by the water used in the Wudhu. After the Wudhu, as we stand up for the Salaah, the predominant thought in our minds should be that we, the sinning and defaulting slaves, were going to stand before a Lord and Master from whom nothing was concealed, who knew all about us, the hidden as well as the manifest, and before whom we would have to appear on the Day of Judgement. We should then formulate precisely the intention to offer the particular prayer and raising the hands upto our ears pronounce not only with the tongue but with our hearts, too, the following words.

TRANSCRIPTION:
ALLAH-O-AKBAR اَللّٰهُ اَكْبَرُ

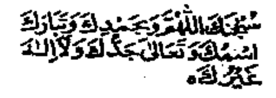
Allah is Great

After it, with arms folded across the middle of the abdoman just beneath the umbilicus Nove and with a full awareness of the fact of our presence before the Almighty we should recite :

THANAA

TRANSCRIPTION:

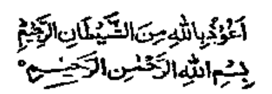
SUB HAANA KAL-LAAHUMMA WA BIHAMDIKA WA TABAARA KASMUKA WA TA'AALAA JADDUKA WA LAA ILAAHA GHAIRUK



O Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! With Thy glorification and Thy praise; blessed is Thy name, great is Thy glory, and there is no God except Thee.

<u>TA'AWWUZ & TASMIYAH</u>

TRANSCRIPTION:



A'OOZU BILLAAH-I-MENASH-SHAI-TAANIR RAJEEM
BISMIL LAAHIR RAHMAA NIR RAHEEM

I seek refuge in Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) from the wicked devil. I begin with the name of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), the Most Benevolent, the All-Merciful.

TRANSCRIPTION:

الحمد لله رب العالمين . الرحمن
الرحيم . مالك يوم الدين .
إياك نعبد وإياك نستعين .
اهدنا الصراط المستقيم .
صراط الذين أنعمت عليهم
غير المغضوب عليهم ولا
الضالين آمين (الفاتحة)

ALHAMDU - LIL-LAAHI RAB-BIL 'AALAMEEN, AR RAHMAA NIR RAHEEM, MAALIKI YAUMID DEEN, IYYAAKA NA'BUDU WA IYYA'AKA NAS-TA'EEN, IHDINAS SIR-AATAL MUSTAQEEM, SIRAATAL LAZ-EENA AN'AMTA ALAIHIM, GHAIRIL MAGH-DHOOBI 'ALAIHIM, WA LADH DHAAL LEEN. AAMEEN. (AL-FAATIHAH)

Praise be to Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), Lord of the worlds, the Compassionate, the All-Merciful, Owner of the Day of Judgement. Thee alone do we worship and to Thee alone do we beg for help. Guide us to the straight path; the path of those whom Thou hast favoured; not (the path) of those who earn Thine anger nor of those who go astray. Aameen!

Then some other Surah of the Holy Quraan, or a part thereof, should be recited. Here we give four brief Surahs along with their translations.

TRANSCRIPTION:

والعصر . إن الإنسان لفي خسر .
إلا الذين آمنوا وعملوا الصالحات
وتواصوا بالحق . وتواصوا بالصبر ۵
(العصر)

WAL 'ASR, IN-NAL INSAANA LAFEE KHUSR, IL-LAL LAZEENA AAMANU WA 'AMILUS SAALI-HAATI WA TAWAASAU BIL HAQQI WA TAWAASAU BIS SABR. (AL-'ASR)

"By the Time ! Lo, man is an a state of loss, except those who belive and do good deeds, and exhort one another to truth, and exhort one another to patient preservance."

TRANSCRIPTION :

QUL HUWAL LAAHU AHAD, AL-LAAHUS-SAMAD, LAM YALID, WA LAM YOOLAD, WA LAM YAKUL LAHOO KUFU WAN AHAD. (AL IKHLAAS)

قُلْ هُوَ اللّٰهُ اَحَدٌ ۚ اَللّٰهُ الصَّمَدُ ۚ
لَمْ يَلِدْ ۚ وَلَمْ يُوْلَدْ ۚ وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَّهٗ
كُفُوًا اَحَدٌ ۔ (الاخلاص)

"Say: He is Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), the One. Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), the eternally be sought of all ! He begetteth not, nor was begotten. And there is none comparable unto Him !"

TRANSCRIPTION :

QUL A'OOZU BE RABBIL FALAQ, MIN SHARRE MA KHALAQ, WA MIN SHARRE GHAASIQIN IZAA WAQAB, WA MIN SHARRIN-NAFFAATHAAT-I-FIL 'OQAD, WA MIN SHARRE HAASIDIN IZAA HASAD. (AL FALAQ)

قُلْ اَعُوْذُ بِرَبِّ الْفَلَقِ ۙ مِنْ
شَرِّ مَا خَلَقَ ۙ وَمِنْ شَرِّ غَاسِقٍ
اِذَا وَقَبَ ۙ وَمِنْ شَرِّ النَّفّٰثٰتِ فِي
الْعُقَدِ ۙ وَمِنْ شَرِّ حَاسِدٍ اِذَا حَسَدَ ۔ (الفلق)

"Say: I seek refuge in the Lord of the dawn from the mischief of created things; from the mischief of darkness as it over-spreads; from the mischief of those who practise secret arts; and from the mischief of the envious one as he practises envy."

TRANSCRIPTION :

QUL A'OOZU BE RABIN NAAS, MALIKIN NAAS, ILAAHINNAS, MIN SHARRIL WAS WAASIL KHANNAAS, AL LAZEE YO WAS WISO FI SUDOORIN NAAS, MINAL JINNAT-I-WAN NAAS. (AN NAAS)

قُلْ اَعُوْذُ بِرَبِّ النَّاسِ ۙ مَلِكِ
النَّاسِ ۙ اِلٰهِ النَّاسِ ۙ مِنْ شَرِّ
الْوَسْوَاسِ الْخَنَّاسِ ۙ الَّذِيْ
يُوَسْوِسُ فِيْ صُدُوْرِ النَّاسِ ۙ مِنَ
الْجِنَّةِ وَالنَّاسِ ۔ (الناس)

"Say: I seek refuge in the Lord and Cherisher of mankind, the King (or Ruler) of mankind, the God of mankind, from the mischief of

the sneaking whisperer, who withdraws (after his whisper), (the same) who whispers into the hearts of mankind, among jinns and among men."

Anyhow, after the Surah al-Faatihah some other Surah of the Holy Quraan, or a part of it, is to be recited. This much of the Holy Quraan must be recited during each rak'at of the Salaah. When the recitation has been completed, with the thought of the Majesty and Glory of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) embedded in our hearts, we should say Allah-o-Akbar and perform the Ruku' by gripping our knees with our hands and without bending the hands and the legs and pronounce 3, 5 or 7 times the phrase:

TRANSCRIPTION :
SUBHAANA RABBIYAL 'AZEEM.

سُبْحَانَ رَبِّيَ الْعَظِيْمِ

Glory be to my Lord, the most Elevated

While reciting the above phrase in the Ruku' we should also meditate on its meaning i.e. on the Glory and Magnificence of the Lord. Then the head be raised, from the Ruku' , saying :

TRANSCRIPTION :
SAMI'AL LAAHU LIMAN HAMIDAH.

سَمِعَ اللّٰهُ لِمَنْ حَمِدَهٗ

Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) has heard the servant who has praised Him.

TRANSCRIPTION :
RAB BANAA LAKAL HAMD

رَبَّنَا لَكَ الْحَمْدُ

Our Lord ! Praise be to Thee

Then, again, we should say Allah-o-Akbar from the depth of our hearts and prostrate ourselves before the Lord and perform two Sajdahs simultaneously. There should be a little pause while sitting between

both the Sajdahs. The sitting position in Salaah is bending the legs behind. The right foot standing and left is flat, over which one sits. Both the palms and finger are placed just above the knee cup. During the Sajdah the under-mentioned phrase should be repeated 3, 5 or 7 times imagining inwardly that Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) is present rIght there, seeing and hearing everything, and we were addressing the words directly to him.

TRANSCRIPTION :
SUBHAANA RAB-BIYAL A'LAA

سُبْحَانَ رَبِّيَ الْأَعْلٰى

Glory be to my Lord, the Most High

While reciting these words in the Sajdah, also, we should try sincerely to call forth within ourselves the realisation of our abject helplessness and humility and the Supreme Might and Magnificence of the Lord. The deeper and stronger the realisation, the better and truer will be the Salaah, for this sentiment constitutes the very life and soul of worship.

This completes one rak'at. All the remaining rak'aats are to be offered similarly except that (Thanaa & Ta'awwuz) is recited only in the first rak'at.

When we sit during Salaah, or at the end of it, we recite Tashah-hud.

TRANSCRIPTON :

ATTAHIYAATU LILAAHI WAS SALAWAATU WAT TAYYEBAATU, AS SALAAMU 'ALAIKA AYYUHAN NABEYYU WA RAHMATUL LAAHI WA BARAKAATUHU, AS SALAAMU 'ALAINAA WA'ALAA 'IBAADILAAHIS SAALIHEEN, ASH-HADU AL-LAA ILAAHA, IL-LAL-LAAHU WA ASH-HADU AN-NA MUHAMMADAN ABDUHU WA RASOOLUH.



"The most blessed greetings, the purest and most sincere inclinations unto Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa). Peace be with thee, O Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam), as well as the mercy of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and His blessings. Peace be on us also, and the pious servants of the Lord. I bear witness that there is no God but Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and I attest that Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) is His servant and Apostle."

If a Salaah consists of three or four rak'aats, when we sit after the second rak'at only the above invocation is recited and at the end of the last rak'at, the Durood Shareef and a prayer are also added to it. The Durood Shareef is as follows:

TRANSCRIPTION :
DUROOD SHAREEF

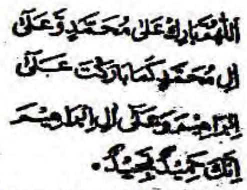
ALLAAHUMMA SAL-LI 'ALAA MUHAMMADIN WA 'ALAA-AAL-I-MUHAMMADIN KAMAA SAL-LAITA 'ALAA IBRAA-HEEMA WA, 'ALAA AAL-I-IBRAA-HEEMA INNAKA HAMEED-DUM MAJEED

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ وَّعَلٰٓى
اٰلِ مُحَمَّدٍ كَمَا صَلَّيْتَ عَلٰٓى
اِبْرَاهِيْمَ وَعَلٰٓى اٰلِ اِبْرَاهِيْمَ
اِنَّكَ حَمِيْدٌ مَّجِيْدٌ

"O Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! Bless Muhammed (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) and his posterity as Thou hast blessed Abraham and his posterity (or followers); Verily, Thou art the Praiseworthy, the Majestic."

TRANSCRIPTON :

ALAAHUMMA BAARIK 'ALAA MOHAMMADIN KAMAA BAARAK-TA 'ALAA IBRAAHEEMA WA 'ALAA AAL-I-IBRAA-HEEMA IN-NAKA HAMEEDUM MAJEED.


اللهم بارك على محمد وعلى
آل محمد كما باركت على
ابراهيم وعلى آل ابراهيم
انك حميد مجيد.

"O Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! Magnify Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) and his posterity (or followers) as Thou hast magnified Abraham and his posterity (or followers); Verily, Thou art the Praiseworthy, the Majestic."

Through the Durood Shareef we invoke the favours and blessings of the Lord on the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) and his family and all those who bear a special association with him. It is, after all, through the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) that the Divine boon of Islam and Salaah has reached us. Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) has, therefore, charged us with the duty of praying for him, his family and his descendants at the end of each Salaah as an expression of our gratitude to him. After the Durood Shareef, it is required of us to recite the under-mentiond prayer for ourselves.

TRANSCRIPTION :

DU'AA

AL-LAAHUMMA IN-NEE ZALAMTU NAF-SEE ZULMAN KATHEERAN WA LAA YAGH-FIRUZ ZUNOOBA IL-LAA ANTA, FAGHFIR LEE MAGHFIRATAM MIN 'INDIKA WARHAM-NEE IN-NAKA ANTAL GHAFOORUR RAHEEM.

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّیْ ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِیْ ظُلْمًا
كَثِیْرًا وَّاِنَّهٗ لَا یَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوْبَ
اِلَّا اَنْتَ فَاغْفِرْ لِیْ مَغْفِرَةً مِّنْ
عِنْدِكَ وَارْحَمْنِیْ اِنَّكَ اَنْتَ
الْغَفُوْرُ الرَّحِیْمُ

"O Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! I have done my soul a great harm and no one can forgive sins if not Thee so grant me forgiveness with Thy pleasure and have pity on me. Thou art Most Forgiving, Most Merciful."

With it the Salaah is brought to an end by turning the head, first to the right and then to the left, and wishing everyone peace and blessings of the Lord.

By means of this prayer we make an open confession of our sins and misdeeds and beseech Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) for His Mercy and Forgiveness. It is best for us always to consider ourselves defaulters and transgressors and make an open-hearted admission of our faults and lapses even after performing an act of worship of the class of Salaah and to repose all our hopes in Divine Compassion and Mercy. We must not allow pride or vanity to come near us because of our devoutness or worshipfullness, for whatever we may do, we can never hope to acquit ourselves fully of the duty of worshipping Allah

(Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and adoring Him and of rendring to Him what is His due.

All that is necessary to know about Salaah has been described in this lesson. Once again, we assert that Salaah is that elixir among the various modes of worship which can transform a man into an angel in the sphere of his deeds and morals, provided that it is offered with due concentration and the feelings of reverence and humility. Brother!, We just canot afford to take lightly the significance, worth and value of the Salaah.

So overpowering was the Porphet's anxiety for his followers to remain steadfast in the matter of Salaah and offer it regularly and unfailingly that he took pains to exhort them about it even during the last moments of his life when it had become extremely difficult for him to speak.

Muslims who neglect the Salaah, and do nothing to establish it and to keep it alive in their midst should imagine, for the sake of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), how are they going to face the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) on the Day of Reckoning; how are they going to look towards him, after disregarding so shemelessly his last will and testament during their lives.

Let us all pray now in the words of Prophet Ibrahim (Alaihe Salaam)

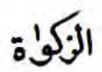


TRANSCRIPTION :

RAB BIJ'ALNEE MUQEEM AS-SALAAAT-I-WA MIN ZURRIYYATEE RAB-BANAA WA TAQABBAL DU'AAE, RABBANAGHFIRLEE WA LE WAALIDAYYA WA LIL MOMINEENA YAUMA YAQOOMUL HISAAB.

Oh my Lord ! make me one who establishes regular prayer, and also (raise such) among my offsprings; Oh my Lord! And accept Thou my prayer. Oh our Lord! Forgive me and my parents and all Believers on the Day that Reckoning will be established (XIV : 40-41)

<ins>***Lesson 3***</ins>



Zakaah

Among the fundamental tenets of Islam, Zakaah occupies a place next in importance only to belief and Salaah. As one would say, it is the third pillar of Islam.

Zakaah means that a Muslim who is in possession of a certain amount of wealth, or more, is required by his religion to spend one-fortieth of it at the end of every twelve months on the poor, the needy and the wayfarer, and on such other items of charity and other heads of expenses as are prescribed[1] for it by Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam).

IMPORTANCE

At several places in the Holy Quraan, Zakaah has been enjoined on Muslims side by side with Salaah. While reading the Holy Quraan you would have come across a number of times the command: "Be steadfast in prayer: practise regular Zakaah." On several occasions it has been spoken of by the Holy Quraan as a characteristic feature of Muslims that, "They establish prayer and give regular Zakaah." These two verses go to show emphatically that those who do not offer Salaah and fail to pay the Zakaah are, in fact, not Muslims, for the two basic attributes and distinguishing features of a genuine Muslim are not present in them.

Anyway, habitual neglect of Salaah and failure to pay the Zakaah are, according to the Holy Quraan , not the qualities of a Muslim but of an atheist or a polytheist. About the Salaah we have a verse in Sura-h-Room of the Holy Quraan which reads:-

1. Rules governing Zakaah can be found in books on Islamic Jurisprudence or can be Learnt directly from the Ulama.

Establish regular Salaah and be not ye among polytheists those who join gods with Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)
(XXX:31)

أَقِيمُوا الصَّلٰوةَ وَلَا تَكُونُوا
مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ (الروم ع٤)

And about the evasion of Zakaah being the attribute of polytheists and infidels we have it in Sura-h-Fussilat:

And woe to polytheists those who join god with Allah those who practise not regular Zakaah, and who even deny the Hereafter:
(XLI:76-77)

وَوَيْلٌ لِّلْمُشْرِكِينَ الَّذِينَ لَا
يُؤْتُونَ الزَّكٰوةَ وَهُمْ بِالْآخِرَةِ
هُمْ كٰفِرُونَ (حٰمٓ السجدة ع١)

DREADFUL CHASTISEMENT

The fate that awaits those who do not pay the Zakaah and the punishment that is going to be handed out to them in the Hereafter is so dreadful that the mere thought of it is enough to make one's hairs stand on end. For instance it is stated in Sura-h-Tauba:

And there are those who bury gold and silver and spend it not in the way of Allah; announce unto them a most grievous penalty-On the Day when heat will be produced out of that (wealth) in the Fire of Hell, and with it will be branded theire foreheads, their flanks and their backs. "This is the (treasure) which ye buried for yourselves. Taste ye the (treasures) ye buried."

(IX:34-35)

وَالَّذِينَ يَكْنِزُونَ الذَّهَبَ
وَالْفِضَّةَ وَلَا يُنْفِقُونَهَا فِي
سَبِيلِ اللهِ فَبَشِّرْهُمْ بِعَذَابٍ
أَلِيمٍ يَوْمَ يُحْمٰى عَلَيْهَا فِي نَارِ
جَهَنَّمَ فَتُكْوٰى بِهَا جِبَاهُهُمْ
وَجُنُوبُهُمْ وَظُهُورُهُمْ هٰذَا
مَا كَنَزْتُمْ لِأَنْفُسِكُمْ فَذُوقُوا
مَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْنِزُونَ (التوبة ع٥)

In one of his Traditions, the Prophet (sallallahu alaihe wasallam) has explained in a little more detail the purport of this Surah. The Tradition when translated into English reads:

> "He who possesses gold or silver (i.e., wealth) but does not fulfill the obligations that are attached to the possessions of wealth (i.e., dues not paid, e.g., Zakaah etc.) plates of fire will be prepared for him on the Day of Judgement. These plates will be heated further in the fire of hell and then his forehead and sides and back will be branded with them. The plates will be heated up again and again to brand him and this will continue throughout the Day of Judgement which will be equal to fifty thousand years in this world."

Beside this, other horrible kinds of punishment are also mentioned in the Traditions. May Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) save us all from them!

UNJUST AND UNGRATEFUL

People who have been blessed by Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) with wealth and prosperity are, indeed, a most unjust and ungrateful lot if they do not pay the Zakaah and shirk from spending their riches in His way as desired by Him. They richly deserve the punishment that is going to be meted out to them on the Day of Recompense.

Again, what is generally not realised is that it is our own poor and indigent brothers we serve when we pay the Zakaah or spend our money on others acts of charity. By evading the Zakaah we, as such, do a great wrong to our needy and helpless brethren and play foul with their rights.

To think over it from another angle, whatever we have by way of property or wealth has, after all, been granted to us by Allah and we are His creatures and slaves. He commands full control and authority over our lives. Were He to demand from us every bit of our property or our life it self, our duty, even then, would lie in placing everything before Him quietly and without demur. It is merely His Kindness and

Benevolence that He has called on us to give away in Zakaah only one-fortieth of the wealth He has bestowed on us.

Reward

Another extra-ordinary favour of the Lord is that He has placed an enormous reward on Zakaah and other deeds of charity though whatever we give away is only out of the possessions and the wealth He has been pleased to bestow on us. It would have been perfectly reasonable and justified if there had been no promise of a reward from Him on these things. If He is pleased with our conduct when we spend, from the resources He has favoured us with, in Zakaah and in other charitable activities, as ordained by Him, and has given the assurance of a rich premium on such deeds of ours, it is solely due to His Infinite Kindness and Mercy. States the Holy Quraan.

The parable of those who spend their substance in the way of Allah is that of a grain of corn: it groweth seven ears and each ear hath a hundred grains. Allah giveth manifold increase to whom He pleaseth: for Allah careth for all and He knoweth all things. Those who spend their substance in the cause of Allah and follow not up their gifts with reminders of their generosity or with injury-their reward is with their Lord: on them shall be no fear nor shall they grieve.

(11-261-262)

مَثَلُ الَّذِيْنَ يُنْفِقُوْنَ اَمْوَالَهُمْ
فِيْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ كَمَثَلِ حَبَّةٍ
اَنْۢبَتَتْ سَبْعَ سَنَابِلَ فِيْ كُلِّ
سُنْۢبُلَةٍ مِّائَةُ حَبَّةٍ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ
يُضٰعِفُ لِمَنْ يَّشَآءُ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ وَاسِعٌ
عَلِيْمٌ ۔ اَلَّذِيْنَ يُنْفِقُوْنَ اَمْوَالَهُمْ
فِيْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ ثُمَّ لَا
يُتْبِعُوْنَ مَآ اَنْفَقُوْا مَنًّا وَّلَآ
اَذًى ۙ لَّهُمْ اَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ
رَبِّهِمْ ۚ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا
هُمْ يَحْزَنُوْنَ (البقرة ع ٣٦)

In the above verse, three promises have been made on behalf of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) to those who practise Zakaah and spend their money in His way through other means:

One, Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) will repay them hundred-fold in this world for what they spend;

Two, they will be rewarded bounteously in the Hereafter;

Three, there will be for them neither fear nor grief on the Day of Judgement.

The holy Companions had the fullest faith in these promises. When verses extolling the spiritual merit of expending in the path of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and denoting what stupendous Divine reward was on it were revealed to the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) and the Companions came to know of them from him they were so deeply stirred that such of them as were poor and did not have the means to give away somethings in charity left their homes and went out in search of work and carried heavy loads on their backs so that they could earn some money to spend for the sake of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa).

We will reproduce here just one Tradition of the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) revealing the significance and the outstanding worth and merit of Zakaah.

States the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam). "There are three things whoever acquires them acqires the real joy of faith; Firstly, to worship Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and no one besides Him; secondly, to believe sincerely in and, lastly, to pay the Zakaah cheerfully on one's possessions every year."

Worldly Advantatges :

Apart from the reward and recompense in the Hereafter, numerous wordly advantages also accrue from practising the Zakaah regularly and spending in other Divinely prescribed branches of charity. For example, a Muslim who discharges these obligations properly experiences a rare feeling of satisfaction and tranquillity in his heart, the poor do not feel jealous of his wealth. On the other hand, they wish

him well, pray for his welfare and look towards him with love and admiration. The world holds him in high esteem everyone likes him and feels drawn towards him sympathetically, and , Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) bestows prosperity on him and multiplies his wealth.

A Tradition of the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) reads:

"The mandate of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) is: "O Son of Adam! Go on spending the wealth I have given thee (on the poor, the needy and the destitute); I shall give thee more."

And, another :

"I can swear no one will become poor because of expending in the way of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)."

May Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) endow us all with stanchest faith in the sayings of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) and grant us the great good fortune to act on them!

Lesson 4



Saum

After Belief, Salaah and Zakaah, the most important duty in Islam is Saum (fasting). The Holy Quraan says :



Oh Ye who believe! fasting is prescribed to you as it was prescribed to those before you that ye may (learn) self-restraint. (II:183)

Fasting is obligatory for Muslims in the month of Ramadhaan. Failure to observe the fast on any day, without a valid reason, during this month is a great sin. We have it on the authority of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) that, "Anyone who does not, without illness or any other valid excuse keep fast on a single day during Ramadhaan will not succeed in making amends for it even if he were to keep fast daily throughout his life in atonement."

Recompense

During the fast, a Muslim abstains from eating and drinking and denies himself the pleasures of legitimate carnal satisfaction solely as a measure of worship, and sacrifices his legitimate biological needs and urges exclusively for the sake of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa).

Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), too, therefore, has placed a most unique reward on it. The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) is reported to have said :

"There is a fixed principle for rewarding all the good deeds of men, and every good deed will be rewarded in accordance with it. But the fast is an exception to this general principle. The standing will and

pleasure of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) is that since a man forgoes food and drink and crushes down his passions utterly for His sake, He will recompense him directly for it."

"All the previous sins of a person are forgiven who undertakes the fasts of the month of Ramadhaan. with full faith and with the object of propitiating Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and earning His reward."

"There are two moments of special joy for a person who fasts: one is when he breaks the fast and this he experiences here in his earthly existence, the other will come in the Hereafter when he will be presented before the Lord."

"Saum is a shield against the fire of hell and a strong fortress (which will protect the believer from infernal chastisement)."

"The fast itself will plead with Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) for him who does fasting that he had gone without the day's meals and shunned the cravings of the flesh for its sake (so he may be forgiven and rewarded to the full). Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) will accept the intercession."

"The odour emanating from the mouth of a person who is fasting (which is sometimes produced because of the empty stomach) is more pleasant in the judgement of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) than the sweet smell of musk."

Another outstanding feature of Saum, beside those given in the Traditions quoted above, is that it lifts man above the level of beasts. To eat and to drink at will and to copulate whenever the urge comes, this is the way of the animals. On the other extreme, to be immuned from hunger and thirst and the impulsions of sex, to stay away permanently from food and drink and cohabitation is the quality of angles. When a person fasts he rises above the animal existence and forges an affinity with angels.

Special Benefit

Moreover, Saum, promotes piety and righteousness in man. It produces in him the ability to control his physical desires. It teaches him how to subordinate his carnal appetites and longings of the heart to the will of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa). It is, thus, most effective in the discipline and evolution of the soul.

But these benefits can be derived only when a person conscientiously strives for them and pays due respect, while he is fasting, to the instructions laid down by the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) in this connection. It is most necessary to leave strictly alone not only food and drink but also all the major and minor sins. He must neither quarrel nor utter a lie nor engage himself in slander and backbiting. In brief, he should scrupulously avoid all sinful deeds, apparent as well as hidden, as is demanded of him in the Traditions. Some of the relevant Traditions are :

"When any of you keeps a fast he should not speak an indecent or filthy word or engage in a noisy scene, and were anyone to quarrel with him and call him names he should simple say, "I am keeping fast (therefore, I can not pay you back in the same coin)."

"Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) has no need for him to go without food and drink who cannot shun evil and falsehood even during a fast."

"Many are there among you who fast and yet gain nothing from it except hunger and thirst."

In sum, fasts can lead to the promotion of the virtues of piety and righteousness and impart the moral strength needed to control and discipline the sensual appetites when, together with abstention from food and drink, all the major and minor transgressions of the law of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) are also zealously avoided while fasting, more specially the use of foul and filthy language, falsehood, slander and backbiting. If fasts are observed in the right spirit and with proper care and solicitude, the benefits indicated above can undoubtedly, be obtained from them.

Lesson 5



Hajj

The last of the fundamental duties in Islam is the Hajj. Laying it down as an essential religious obligation of Muslims, the Holy Quraan says :

وَلِلّٰهِ عَلَى النَّاسِ حِجُّ الْبَيْتِ مَنِ اسْتَطَاعَ إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلًا وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ اللّٰهَ غَنِيٌّ عَنِ الْعٰلَمِينَ

Pilgrimage thereto is a duty, men owe to Allah, on those who can afford the journey, but if any one denies faith, Allah stands not in need of any of His creatures.

(III:97)

In this verse while the Hajj has been declared obligatory it has been made clear that it is applicable only to those who possess the means and material resources to undertake it. But care has been taken, in the last part of it, to warn that if Muslims whom Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) has blessed with the necessary material means to perform the pilgrimage still fail to carry out the duty through sheer ingratitude (as is common among the wealthy classes these days) then Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) does not stand in need of their pilgrimage. The Almighty, definitely, is not going to lose anything by their not performing the Hajj, the loss will entirely to them. They will forfeit His good graces, they will deprive themselves of His benevolence, and Allah-forbid, a most lamentable fate will be waiting for them in the Hereafter. The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) is reported to have gone as far as to say :

"A person whom Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) has given enough to perform the Hajj, if he still fails to do so then it does not matter at all whether he dies as a Jew or a Christian."

Brothers! If there is any regard in our hearts for Islam, if we can boast of the least attachment to Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and the

Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) none of us who can afford to make the journey should remain without performing the Hajj after we have known this Tradition.

Spiritual Merit

The importance of the Hajj and the spiritual meritoriousness of those who perform it have been emphasised in a number of Traditions. We will reproduce a few of them here.

"Those who make the pilgrimage for the Hajj or the 'Umrah they are the guests of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa): their petitions, if they make any to Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), will be granted, and if they seek deliverance from sins, their sins will be forgiven."

"He who performs the Hajj and commits no wicked or sinful deed during it and does not disobey Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), he will return from it as pure and guiltless as he was at the time of his birth."

"The reward for a pure and untainted Hajj is paradise itself and nothing short of it."

Immediate Gains

The remission of sins and the enjoyment of the supreme blissfulness of paradise as a result of the spiritual auspiciousness of the Hajj will, Inshaa Allah, surely be granted to the faithful in full measure in life to come, but the exquisite thrill and the sublime joy one experiences, the soul-strirring sensation of delight and wonderment one feels, on seeing that choicest seat of Divine splendour - the House of Ka'bah and on visiting those special places in Makkah where the memories of Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) are still alive, are also things of the celestial world on the earth. Then the pilgrimage to the Prophet's (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) mausoleum at Madinah, the offering up of Salaah in his own mosque, the addressing of the salutation and the benedication to him directly, the aimless wanderings in the streets and the wilderness of the blessed city, the breathing in of its air and the fragrance which always seems to be filling its

atmosphere, the ethereal joy of his remembrance bursting upon one sometimes in laughter and sometimes in tears - all these things - provided, of coruse, that one is blessed enough to feel them - are the immediate rewards a pilgrim gets when he betakes himself to the holy cities of Makkah and Madinah.

Five Pillars of Islam

The five fundamental teachings of Islam we have discussed so far, the Kalimah, Salaah, Zakaah, Saum and Hajj, are known as the 'Five Pillars of Islam'.

A well-known Tradition of the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) tells us that, "The foundation of Islam rests on these five things; (i) the affirmation of لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَّسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ (ii) the establishment of Salaah (iii) the payment of Zakaah (iv) the observance of Saum in the month of Ramadhaan and (v) the performance of Hajj by those who can afford to make the pilgrimage."

When these five items are spoken of as the Pillars of Islam, it means that these are the fundamental duties of the faith. If carried out properly these duties are capable of producing in us the ability to fulfil our other religious obligations as well. Here we have dwelt only on their importance and the intrinsic spiritual virtue that underlies them. Detailed rules and principles governing them can be learnt from reliable books on Islamic Jurisprudence or directly from a Muslim theologian.

Lesson 6

التقوىٰ

Taqwaa

Taqwaa (piety) forms part of the basic essentials of Islam. It means to observe the Divine commandments conscientiously and scrupulously and to avoid all forbidden, wicked and shameful things, believing wholly and firmly in the Great Requital of the Last Day and fearing Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and His wrath and punishment. In other words, it demands of us, on the one hand, to carry out, thoroughly and well, the duties prescribed by the Almighty and to fulfil zealously the rights of men who have a claim on us according to the Divine law, and, on the other, to refrain strictly from doing anything that has been prohibited by Him. It calls on us to make the fear of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) our constant companion. Both in the Holy Quraan and the Traditions a very great emphasis has been laid on Taqwaa and righteousness and it has been urged on us most forcefully and persistently to cultivate it in ourselves. Some of the relevant verses of the Holy Quraan are:

O ye who believe! fear Allah as He should be feared and die not except in a state of Islam.
(III-102)

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ (آل عمران ع١٠)

So fear Allah as much as you can; listen and obey.
(LXIV:16)

فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ وَاسْمَعُوا وَأَطِيعُوا (التغابن ع٢)

O ye who believe ! fear Allah and let every soul look to what (provisions) he has sent forth for the morrow. And fear Allah; for Allah is well-acquainted with (all) that ye do.
(LIX:18)

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْتَنْظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ (الحشر ع٣)

The Quraanic verses, further, reveal that there is a great favour of the Lord even in this world on those who fear Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and practise Taqwaa and righteousness. Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) shows special munificence to them and makes His help available to them in thousand ways:

And for those who fear Allah He (ever) prepares a way out and He provides for him from (sources) he never could imagine.
(XLV:2-3)

ومن يتق الله يجعل له مخرجا ويرزقه من حيث لا يحتسب (الطلاق ع١)

The Holy Quraan also tells that those who lead a life of Taqwaa and righteousness become the Friends of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), and, then, for them there is neither fear nor shall they ever grieve.

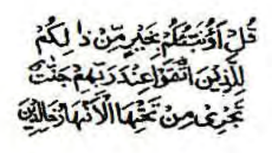
Behold! verily on the Friends of Allah there is no fear nor shall they grieve, those who believe and (constantly) guard against evil; for them are Glad Tidings in the life of the world and the Hereafter.

(X-62-64)

ألا إن أولياء الله لا خوف عليهم ولا هم يحزنون الذين آمنوا وكانوا يتقون لهم البشرى في الحياة الدنيا وفي الآخرة (يونس ع٧)

Some of the wonderful boons and blessings that await the pious and the righteous in the Hereafter have been revealed briefly in the following verses:

Say: shall I give you glad tidings of things far better than those? for the righteous are Gardens in nearness to their Lord, with rivers flowing beneath; therein is their eternal



فِيهَا وَأَزْوَاجٌ مُّطَهَّرَةٌ وَرِضْوَانٌ
مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ بَصِيرٌ بِالْعِبَادِ
(آل عمران ع٢)

home with Companions (pure and holy) and the good pleasure of Allah. For in Allah's sight are (all) His servants.

(III:15)

وَإِنَّ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ لَحُسْنَ مَآبٍ
جَنَّاتِ عَدْنٍ مُّفَتَّحَةً لَّهُمُ
الْأَبْوَابُ مُتَّكِئِينَ فِيهَا يَدْعُونَ
فِيهَا بِفَاكِهَةٍ كَثِيرَةٍ وَشَرَابٍ
وَعِندَهُمْ قَاصِرَاتُ الطَّرْفِ
أَتْرَابٌ هَٰذَا مَا تُوعَدُونَ
لِيَوْمِ الْحِسَابِ إِنَّ هَٰذَا
لَرِزْقُنَا مَا لَهُ مِن نَّفَادٍ
(ص ع٤)

And verily, for the Righteous is a beautiful place of (Final) Return. Gardens of Eternity whose doors will ever be opened to them; therein will they recline (at ease); therein can they call (at pleasure) for fruit in abundance and (delecious) drink; and beside them will be chaste women restraining their glances (companions) of equal age. Such is the promise made for the Day of Account! Truly, such will be Our Bounty (to you) It will never fail.

(XXXVIII:49-54)

In the Holy Quraan, again men of Taqwaa are given the very special tidings of place of exceptional nearness to Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) in the Hereafter :

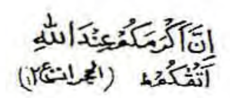
إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فِي جَنَّاتٍ وَ
نَهَرٍ فِي مَقْعَدِ صِدْقٍ عِندَ
مَلِيكٍ مُّقْتَدِرٍ (القمر ع٣)

As to the Righteous they will be in the midst of Gardens and Rivers in an Assembly fo Truth in the presence of a Sovereign Omnipotent.

(LIV: 54-55)

The sole criterion of honour and superiority with Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) is Taqwaa.

Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you.



(XLIX : 13)

Similarly, it has been declared by the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) in one of his Traditions that :

"Nearest and dearest to me are those who possesses the virtue of Taqwaa (no matter what race or nationality they belong to or which country they live in)."

Taqwaa (i.e. fear of Allah Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa and a over-powering anxiety for the Hereafter) is the root of all virtue. It is the measure of all goodness. We will be as good and noble and as free from what is bane and corrupt as there is Taqwaa in us.

Some other Traditions of Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) are :

"A holy Companion once said to the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam), O Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam)! I have heard so many of your valuable sayings that I fear I may not be able to remember them all. So I request you for a comprehensive advice which may suffice for me always. The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) replied, "Fear Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) in proportion to your knowledge and make that fear and Taqwaa the guiding principles of your life."

"He who has fear will set out early and he who will set out early will reach the destination in time."

"The fortunate and the successful, indeed, are those who fear Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and prepare for the life to come."

"Even a single tear shed out of fear of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and of His anger and punishment carries a great value in His eyes."

"There are two drops," says the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam), "and two marks than which nothing is more precious to Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa). Of the two drops so exceedingly dear to Him, one is the tear that may have fallen from the eyes of anyone out of His fear, and the other is the drop of blood that is shed in His path. Similarly, of the two marks one is the mark sustained in the path of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) (i.e. the scar left behind by a wound sustained in Jihad), and the other is the mark which may have developed as a result of the carrying out of a religious obligation (as for example, the marks one often sees on the forehead and kness of those who offer the Salaah regularly)."

We will take up one more Tradition of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam). It says :

"Never can he go to hell who weeps in the fear of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)."

The sum and ful substance of the entire discussion is that it is great, indeed, to be blessed with true fear of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and a genuine solicitude for the Hereafter. It can literally revolutionise one's whole existence.

Brothers! Know it thoroughly and well that one who is Allah - fearing in this transitory world will have absolutely nothing to worry in the Hereafter. He will have neither fear nor anxiety. He will dwell in eternal peace, comfort and happiness by the Grace of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa). On the contrary, he who is not Allah - fearing and shows no concern for After-life and refuses to look beyond the pleasures of material existence for him, There will be terrible anguish and distress in the life to come. For thousands of years he will be shedding tears of blood.

The surest way to develop Taqwaa. i.e. Allah - fearingness and solicitude for the Hereafter is to avail oneself of the company of the devout servants of the Lord who fear Him and obey His commands honestly. Then there are good and reliable religious books which should be read regularly, and, if a person is illiterate, he should have them read out to him by others. Lastly, it is advisable to meditate in solitude on death and on the rewards one is going to get from Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) for one's good and virtuous deeds and the punishment that is going to be awarded by Him for one's sins and transgressions against the Divine Law. One should dwel mentally on one's state and visualise what is going to happen in the grave. What will one's condition be when men will be raised up again on the Last Day and produced before Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)? What will one do when the balance-sheet of one's conduct on the earth will be unrolled? Where will one, then hide one's face?

Lesson 7

حسن المعاملة والدين

Fairness and Honesty in Dealings

Uprightness and honesty in dealings with people forms a vital part of the fundamental teachings of Islam.

The Holy Quraan as well as the Traditions of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) are emphatic that a true Muslim is he who is honest and upright in his business and other formal dealings and affairs, keeps his word and fulfils his promises, shuns fraud and avoids deceit and perfidy, encroaches not upon the rights of others nor takes part in wrongful litigation, does not give false evidence, and abstains from making dishonest money as from usury and graft. Whoever is not free from these vices is, according to the Holy Quraan and the Traditions, not a true believer but a renegade and a worthless transgressor.

We now proceed to examine some of the relevant Quraanic verses and Traditions. A short verse of the Holy Quraan says :

O ye who believe ! Eat not up each other's property by unfair and dishonest means.

(IV : 29)

يَاأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ بِالْبَاطِلِ
(النساء ٥)

The verse forbids Muslims against all unclean and corrupt means of making money, such as, dishonest trading, embezzlement, gambling, speculation and bribery. Then there are verses in which these hateful practices are dealt with one by one. For instance, a severe warning is

given in the following verse to traders who cheat in weighment :

Woe to those that deal in fraud, those who, when they have to receive by measure from men, (take) exact full measure, but when they have to give by measure or weight to men, give less than due. Do they not think that they will be called to account on a Mighty Day when (all) mankind will stand before the Lord of the Worlds.

(LXXXIII : 1-6)

وَيْلٌ لِّلْمُطَفِّفِينَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا
اكْتَالُوا عَلَى النَّاسِ يَسْتَوْفُونَ
وَإِذَا كَالُوهُمْ أَو وَّزَنُوهُمْ
يُخْسِرُونَ أَلَا يَظُنُّ أُولَٰئِكَ
أَنَّهُم مَّبْعُوثُونَ لِيَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ
يَوْمَ يَقُومُ النَّاسُ لِرَبِّ
الْعَالَمِينَ (المطففين ع ١)

In the same way, the under-mentioned verse exhorts Muslims to be very particular about their trusts and about other people's rights.

Allah doth command you to render back your trusts to those to whom they are due.

(IV : 58)

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَن تُؤَدُّوا
الْأَمَانَاتِ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهَا (النساء ع ٨)

At two places in the Holy Quraan a cheif distinguishing feature of Muslims is said to be that they are :

Those who faithfully observe their trusts and their covenants
(XXIII : 8)

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِأَمَانَاتِهِمْ
وَعَهْدِهِمْ رَاعُونَ
(المؤمنون ع ١)

The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) used often to say in his sermons :

"Remember, there is no faith in him who is not trustworthy, there is no place for him in religion who cares not for his pledged word or promise."

Another Tradition says : "The signs of a hypocrite are three: when he speaks, he lies; when he promises, he fails; and when he is trusted, he plays false."

Condemning those who cheat in business the sacred Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) has said, "He who cheats is not of us. Deceitfulness and fraud are things that lead one to Hell."

The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) once came upon a heap of corn in the market of Madinah and thrust his hand into it. His fingers felt damp. On being asked, the trader replied that rain had fallen upon it. The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) observed, "Why did you not then keep (the wet portion of) it above the dry corn, so that men may see it? He, who deceives, is not one of us."

Thus, traders who deceive by showing to customers a false sample or by concealing from them the defects of the article they offer for sale are not true Muslims in the judgement of the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) and, Allah - forbid, they are going to end up in Hell. Another Tradition says :

"The seller must explain to the buyer the defects, if any, in the quality of the article offered for sale. Should this not be done, the seller will permanently be caught in the wrath of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) according to another narrator the exact words are, "he will always be cursed by the angels."

In short, all manner of deceit and dishonesty in business is prohibited in Islam. It has been proclaimed to be an act worthy of unqualified condemnation. The Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) has expressed his strong dislike for those who do so. He has said that he will have nothing to do with them; they do not belong to him.

Likewise, bribery and usury, although they might be practised by

mutual consent and agreement, are totally disallowed to Muslims and those who are guilty of them have been condemned squarely in the Traditions. A well-known Tradition on usury reads :

"The curse of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) rests on him who offers loan on usurious terms, and on him who receives, and on those who are witnesses to the transaction, and on the writer who writes the deed thereof."

As for bribery, the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) has said, in a Tradition, "condemned alike the giver of bribes and the taker of bribes in deciding cases."

A Tradition goes even to the extent of saying that, "If a person made a recommendation for anyone in a just matter and the gratified party gave him something as a gift (in return for it) and he accepted it then he committed a grave error (meaning that it, too, is a form of bribery)."

Worse still is the usurpation of another's property by force or fraud or dishonest litigation. We have it on the authority of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) that :

"Whoever occupies land belonging to another unjustly, will be sunk into the ground along with that plot of land on the Doomsday till he reaches the lowest layer of the earth."

"He who acquires the property of a Muslim unjustly by taking a false oath (before an officer) is debarred by Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) from entering paradise and the Fire of Hell is made inevitable for him". On hearing it a Companion is reported to have asked, "Even if it be a minor thing?" The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) is said to have replied,"Yes, even if it be a twig of pilo" (a plant which grows wild. Its twigs are used for cleaning the teeth i.e. miswaak).

The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam), again, is reported to

have warned a person who was very fond of entering into litigation with others in these strong words, "Remember, he who will obtain the property of another by swearing a false oath will appear as a leper before Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) (on the Day of Judgement)."

In another tradition, Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) said,

"Whoever laid his claim on a thing that was not his, is not of us. He should reserve a place for himself in the Hell."

It is narrated that one day, after the morning prayers the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) stood up and said thrice with great feeling that, "Perjury has been made the equivalent of polytheism."

Ill-Gotten wealth

Money or property which is acquired through unfair means, as we have just indicated, is obviously unclean and unlawful and anyone who makes use of it and spend it on his needs does himself a great harm. As the sacred Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) has warned, his prayers will not find acceptance by Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), his supplications will not be answered, his petitions will not be granted, and in case he does good deeds they will avail him nothing. In the Hereafter, there will be no share for him in the special favours and good graces of the Lord.

A Tradition says: " If a person earns or acquires anything through dishonest means and then gives away a part of it in charity, his act of charity will not be accpeted, and if he will spend from it on his needs there will be no auspiciousness or real prosperity in it, and should he leave it behind to his descendants on his death it will serve for him as hell's provision. Believe it, Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) does not erase evil with evil (i.e., charity and almsgiving from ill-goten gains can never lead to salvation). One impurity cannot remove another, it cannot make it pure".

And another Traditions is :

"Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) is pure Himself and He accepts only those offerings that are pure."

The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam), at the end of the Tradition also narrated the story of a man " Who undertakes a long and tedious journey (to supplicate to Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) at a sacred place) and arrives (at his destination) in such a state that his hair is dishevelled and his body is covered from head to foot with dust. He throws up his hands towards the heavens and cries out, "O Lord ! O my preserver ! but his sustenance is of the impure and he has been brought up on what is polluted; how can his prayer be granted when such is the case?"

The above amply demonstrates that when a person draws his livelihood from impure means his prayers no longer remain worthy of being answered. Yet another Tradition of the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) reads:

"If a person buys a cloth for ten Dirhams (a currency of olden times) and one of them is tainted (i.e., it has been earned dishonestly), none of his Salaah will be accepted by Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) as long as he wears it."

And, here is one more:

"The flesh gathered on one's body by means of unclean earning deserves to be thrown into the Fire."

Brothers! If we have the tiniest spark of faith left in our hearts we must make up our minds, once for all, after hearing these Traditions, that whatever proverty and hardship we may have to endure in the world we will never try to make a single penny from unclean and dishonest sources and will always content ourselves with what we earn through honest lawful means.

Clean Earning and Honest Trade

Just as Islam has condemned all unclean and unlawful means of making money as wicked and sinful, and denounced all profits derived from them as filthy and devilish, in the same way it has proclaimed great virtue in seeking one's livelihood honestly and in engaging oneself cleanly in trade or profession. The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) has said:

"To seek a clean earning is also a duty next only to the prescribed duties of the faith."

"The cleanest food is that which has been earned by the labour of his hand. Indeed, Prophet David (Alaihis Salaam) used to work with his own hands for the food he ate."

"The trader who plies his trade cleanly and honestly will rise in the Hereafter in the company of prophets, saints and martyrs."

KINDNESS AND COMPASSION IN DEALINGS

Islam has laid great stress on honesty and truthfulness in trade and other monetary dealings and described profound virtue and excellency in it. It has declared it to be a means of gaining nearness unto Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa). Islam, likewise, enjoins on us to be kind and avoid harshness and severity in transaction and other dealings, too. It has promised great spiritual advantage in it also. we will reproduce two Traditions of the the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam).

"Blessings of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) be on him who is mild and gentle in his transactions and in the realisation of his dues."

"Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) will protect him from the agonies of the Day of judgement who allows respite to a poor and indigent servant of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) in the payment of his debt or writes off the debt (altogether or a part of it)."

In another Tradition it is said "Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) will provide him with the shade of his blessing on the Day of judgement."

These Traditions are meant for merchants and other wealthy men from whom people borrow money on the hour of their need. As for the borrowers, the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) used to urge them to do their best to pay back their debts quickly lest they die in a state of indebtedness, with the claim of anyone lying unsettled on their heads. How strict the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) was in this regard can be imagined from the following Traditions :

"If a person is killed in the path of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) then all his sins will be forgiven (by virtue of his martyrdom). But if he owes anyone anything even martyrdom will not secure his release from it."

"By the Lord in whose power lies the life of Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam), if a person falls a martyr in the path of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and returns to life and is killed again in the path of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and returns to life only to be killed once more in the cause of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and there is still a debt outstanding against him, even then he will not be able to enter Paradise (if the matter of debt is not resolved)."

These two Traditions are quite sufficient to show what great importance Islam attaches to monetary affairs and the rights of fellow human beings. May Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) grant us the wisdom to understand their delicacy and significance and to make it our constant endeavour to assure that the claims of no one are left unsatisfied by us !

Lesson 8

حقوق المعاشرة

Social Conduct And Mutual Rights

Social conduct, good manners and respect for the rights of each other, again, form an important part of Islamic teachings. One can become a good and true Muslim only when one also observes faithfully the social code of Islam by which we mean the rules and regulations governing the modes and manner of behaviour between man and man and between man and society as laid down by it. For instance, what should the attitude of parents be towards their children and of children towards their parents ? What sort of conduct should prevail between brothers and between brothers and sisters ? How should husband and wife live together ? How to treat those who are older than ourselves and those who are younger ? What are the rights of our neighbuors on us ? How should the rich behave towards the poor and the poor towards the rich ? What mode of relationship should be maintained between master and servant ? And, so forth. Islam has provided us with a most comprehensive and complete guidance of law to fulfil our social responsibilities and act in our dealings and relationships with all those individuals and groups with whom we come into contact, one way or the other, in different walks of our daily life, and this is what we are going to discuss in this chapter.

Rights of Parents:

The most primary relationship in this world exists between man and his parents. In Islam the rights of parents have been described as next only to the rights of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa). To quote from the Holy Quràan:

وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا إِمَّا يَبْلُغَنَّ عِندَكَ الْكِبَرَ أَحَدُهُمَا أَوْ كِلَاهُمَا فَلَا تَقُل لَّهُمَا أُفٍّ وَلَا تَنْهَرْهُمَا وَقُل لَّهُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا ۝ وَاخْفِضْ لَهُمَا جَنَاحَ الذُّلِّ مِنَ الرَّحْمَةِ وَقُل رَّبِّ ارْحَمْهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيَانِي صَغِيرًا ۝
(بنی اسرائیل ع ٣)

The Lord has ordained that ye worship none but Him; and to show kindness to your parents whether one or both of them attain to old age with thee; and say not to them "Fie !" neither reproach them; but speak to them both with respectful speech; and defer humbly to them out of tenderness; and say, "Lord ! have compassion on them both, as they reared me when I was little."

(XVII: 23-24)

Another verse of the Holy Book goes on to tell that should the parents of a person be polytheists and want him also to follow their faith, he ought to decline to obey them, but even then he should continue to treat them well and to behave towards them with respect. The exact words of the verse are:

وَإِن جَاهَدَاكَ عَلَىٰ أَن تُشْرِكَ بِي مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ فَلَا تُطِعْهُمَا
وَصَاحِبْهُمَا فِي الدُّنْيَا مَعْرُوفًا (لقمٰن ع ٢)

"But if they strive to make thee join in worship with Me things of which thou hast no knowledge, obey them not; yet bear them company in this life with justice (and consideration). *(XXXI:15)*

Beside the Holy Quraan, in the Traditions also, great stress has been laid on rendering full devotion and obedience to one's parents. To disobey one's parents, to ignore their feelings, or to disregard their comfort or happiness in any other way has been characterised by the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) as a grievous sin. Take these Traditions, for example:

" In the pleasure of parents lies the pleasure of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), and in their displeasure, the displeasure of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)."

Once a person enquired from the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam), "What are the rights of parents?" The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) replied, "Parents are the heaven and hell of their children (meaning that salvation and paradise could be gained by serving one's parents well while disobedience to and ill-treatment of them could lead one to hell)."

The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) once observed, "Every time a dutiful son or daughter looks with affection and respect towards his or her father or mother Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) writes against his or her name the reward of an accepted Hajj." Upon this, some of the Companions enquired, "Our Master ! Suppose a person does so a hundred times each day; will he, even then, be given the reward of an accepted Hajj for every glance he casts?" "Yes", the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) replied, "Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) is the Most Great, the Most Holy (meaning that the bounty of the Lord is boundless)."

In one Tradition, it is told, "Heaven lies under the feet of the parents."

The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) once said to the Companions that the most mortal sins in the world were three:

"To associate anyone with Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), to disobey parents, and to give false evidence."

Again, "There are three types of men towards whom Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) will not look with mercy on the Day of Judgement, and one of them are those who disobey their parents."

Rights of Children

Islam has laid an equal stress on the rights of children on parents also. We will leave out here the responsibility of parents to feed and clothe their children since an instinctive awareness of these are found in them and they carry it out normally and in the natural way.

The rights of our children about which we are generally careless and neglectful, are those concerning their moral and religious training and up-bringing. Islam has made it binding on us, as a matter of duty that we brought up our wards and children in such a way that they did not have to make their way to hell after death. We are required to be extremely careful in this respect. Says the Holy Quraan:

O ye who believe ! save yourselves and your families from the Fire of Hell.

(LXVI: 6)



The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) has, in a Tradition, stressed the need of giving proper training to children in these words:

"No better gift can there be from a father to his children then that he brought them up properly."

Some parents are more fond of their sons than daughters. They take a great interest in the upbringing of their male issues while the welfare and training of the female ones are generally neglected by them. Daughters are, sometimes, considered to be a burden. For this reason, Islam has devoted particular attention to the proper upbringing of girls and extolled it as an act of great virtue. The Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) has said:

"Anyone who has a daughter or a sister and he treats her well and looks after her welfare and training carefully and marries her at the right place, Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) will reward him with paradise."

Mutual Rights between Husband and Wife:

Conjugal relationship occupies a place of outstanding importance in the economy of human affairs. It is most strong and intimate tie that binds husband and wife into a life-long partnership. Islam, therefore, has furnished a complete guindance in respect of it as well. In nutshell, Islam demands from wives to be scrupulously faithful to their husbands and to remain their best friends and true well-wishers and never to

betray their trusts. The Holy Quraan declares:

Therefore, the righteous women are obedient, and guard (in the husband's) absence. *(IV: 34)*	فَالصّٰلِحٰتُ قٰنِتٰتٌ حٰفِظٰتٌ لِّلْغَيْبِ (النساء ٣٤)

And from husbands it requires that they should give their love ungrudgingly to their wives, maintain them as best as they can within their means and leave nothing to be desired by way of their emotional contentment. Says, again, the Holy Quraan:

Live with your wives on a footing of kindness and equity. *(IV:19)*	وَعَاشِرُوهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ (النساء ١٩)

In keeping with these teachings of the Holy Quraan, the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) used to attach profound importance to the harmony of married life among Muslims. He used to urge upon Muslim husbands and wives to keep each other happy and to attend to each other's needs and interests with loving care. Some of his Traditions in this connection read:

"If a man calls his wife to him and the wife refuses and he stays annoyed with her during the night, the angels will not cease to curse her name till day-break."

"The woman who dies in such a state that her husband is pleased with her shall go to Heaven."

"By the Lord in whose power lies the life of Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam), no woman can fulfil the rights of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) who does not fulfil the rights of her husband."

"Charge you to be kind to your wives. Remember this advice of mine. See, they are subordinate to you and in your power."

"Good among you are those who are good to their wives."

"He is the most perfect believer (in the sight of Allah Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) who is perfect in his manners and most affectionate towards his wife and children."

Rights of Relatives:

Besides our parents and children and husbands or wives there also exists a special tie of kinship between us and our other relatives. Islam has paid due attention to this aspect of our social existence, too, and evolved certain rights and duties in respect of it. Thus, in the Holy Quraan we are told to be kind to our kinsmen and one who disregards and pays no heed to the bonds of kinship has been condemned as a transgressor and a sinner of the worst order.

The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) once said, "He who violates the rights of kinsmen and shows no respect for the bonds of kinship in his conduct shall not go to heaven."

In this connection a special advice of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) is that if a relative violates the ties of relationship with regard to us even then we should continue to fulfil, on our part, the obligations we have towards him. The words of the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) are, "If a near relative treats you indifferently and ignores the bond of relationship, do not turn your back on him but keep on discharging, on your part, the obligations of relationship towards him."

Rights of the Old on the Young and of the Young on the Old:

It is a general principle of Islamic social behaviour that everyone should repect his elders and carry himself with due deferènce in their presence. In the same way, those who are older are required to treat those who are younger to them with kindness and affection, even if there be no relationship between them.

Said the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) : "He is not of us who is not affectionate to those who are younger than himself and respectful to those who are older."

"For the young man who will honour an old man because of his years, Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) will appoint men who will honour him in his old age."

Rights of Neighbours:

Apart from relatives, there obtains a permanent association also between a man and his neighbours. In Islam full attention has accordingly, been paid to it and definite instructions have been provided for our guidance in this behalf as well. The Holy Quraan calls upon us to be good and courteous in our behaviour towards our neighbors in the same way as it has commanded us to maintain the best of conduct towards our parents, brothers and sisters and towards our other near relatives:

وَالْجَارِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْجَارِ الْجُنُبِ وَالصَّاحِبِ بِالْجَنبِ (النساء ٣٦)

And then Neighbours who are near, and the neighbours who are strangers and the companions by your side.

(IV:36)

Three categories of neighbours have been spoken of in this verse and it is expected of us to maintain cordial relations with all of them.

The phrase 'neighbours who are near' denotes neighbours who may also happen to be our relatives; 'neighbours who are strangers' denotes those with whom we have no family ties, and non-muslim neighbours are included in this category. Whereas 'companions by your side, means persons with whom we come into contact temporarily in the course of our daily activities, like a casual acquaintance, a fellow-traveller, a classmate and a colleague·whatever their religious denomination is, Islam reminds us that we have an obligation to be friendly and sympathetic towards all the three categories of neighbours.

Says the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) :

"He who believes in Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and the Day of Recompense should never harm his neighbour."

"He is not a Muslim who eats his fill and lets his neighbour go hungry."

It is narrated that the Apostle of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) once emphatically exclaimed, "He is not a believer in Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)." The question was asked, "O Apostle of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) ! Who is not a believer in Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)?" The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) observed, "Whose neighbour does not feel secure on his account."

Yet another Tradition reads:

"He shall not go to Heaven from whose mischief his neighbours do not feel secure."

It is reported that once a Companion said to the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam), "O Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) there is a woman about whom it is said that she offers a geat deal of prayers, observes a great deal of fasts and does a great deal of charity, but she also causes a great deal of trouble to her neighbours owing to the sharpness of her tongue." The Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) observed, "She will go to Hell." The Companion then said, "O Apostle of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) ! There is another woman about whom it is said that she engages herself little in prayers, fasting and charity (that is, she observes the prayers, fasts and charity less than the first woman) but never offends her neighbours by her tongue. The HolyProphet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) observed, "She will be in Heaven."

Brothers! Such are the rights of neighbours in Islam. Alas, how heedless have we now grown to them!

Rights of the Weak and the Poor:

So far we have dealt with the rights of men with whom we have an intimate personal connection of some kind, whether of family or neighbuorhood or business or friendship. In addition to these, Islam has conferred certain special rights on the weaker and the poorer sections of the society and on every kind of a needy person. It has been made the duty of all well-to-do people to look after their well-being and to serve them in whatever way they can. The more prosperous among Muslim, should realise that their less fortunate brethren, too, have a share in their wealth and other capablities. The Holy Quraan has enjoined at a number of places that the needs of the orphans, the weak and the indigent and other needy and destitute persons should be taken care of, the hungry should be fed and the ill-clad should be clothed, and, so on.

It is narrated that once the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) joined two of his fingers and showing them to the Companions said, "He who supports an orphan shall be as close to me in Heaven as are these fingers to each other."

He is also reported to have observed:

"He who endeavours to relieve the widow, the depressed and the needy is as one who strives in the service of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), and , in Divine reward, he is as one who permanently fasts during the days and spends nights in prayers."

"Feed the hungry, visit the sick and free the captives."

"Help the distressed and be a guide to those who have lost their way."

No distinction has been drawn in the above Traditions of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) between a Muslim and a non-Muslim. All poor and needy persons have a claim on us no matter to what religion they belong. We cannot withhold our helping hand from anyone on the ground that he is not a co-religionist. In some Traditions, the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) has exhorted us to show kindness also to animals and promised great reward to those who take pity on these dumb creatures of the Lord.

Islam, truly , is a blessing to the entire universe and the whole of creation, and our guide and master, Prophet Muhamad (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) "a mercy to the worlds." The pity is that we ourselves have wandered away from his teachings. Would to Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) that we, too become a mercy to the whole world by becoming true Muslims.

Rights of Muslims on Each Other:

Further, there is a special claim of Muslims on each other which flows out of the common bond of Islam.

Said the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) :

"Every Muslim is a Muslim's brother. He should neither harm him himself nor leave him alone (when someone else does so, he tries his best to help him and to protect him). Whoever among you will fulfil the need of his brother Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) will take it upon Himself to fulfil his needs, and a Muslim who will remove the distress of a Muslim brother will, in return, find a distress of his removed by Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) on the Day of Requital, and anyone who will hide the shame of a Muslim, his sins will be hidden by Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) on the Last Day."

"Do not bear a grudge or enmity against each other, do not be jealous of each other, and do not indulge in backbiting."

"Live like brothers and the servants of One Allah (Subhaanahu

Wata'aalaa). It is not allowed to a Muslim to cease to be on talking terms with a Mulsim for more than three days."

"The life, honour and property of a Muslim are sacred for another."

We will now close the disussion on social relations and mutual rights and duties with the following Tradition which alone is enough to fill our hearts with fear.

The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) is reported one day to have put the question to the Companions, "Who is a pauper ?" The companions replied, "Our master ! A pauper is a person who is without a peny of his own." The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) said, "No. A pauper among us is a man who will appear on the Day of Recompense with a large stock of prayers, fasting and alms-giving but in the world he would have abused someone, slandered someone, beaten someone and cheated and transgressed against someone. When we will be made to stand at the place of Reckoning, those against whom he would have been guilty of these transgressions will come forward and they will be given from his good deeds what will be due to them till all the fund of his good deeds will be exhausted and, then the sins of the aggrieved parties will be forced down upon him and he will, ultimately, be thrown into Hell."

Brothers ! Ponder over this Tradition and think how utterly ruinous and disastrous it is for us to encroach upon the right of others and to indulge in backbiting, slander or abuse. If you have transgressed against anyone or usurped his rights, make amends for it in your lifetime, pay back to him what may be his due or seek his forgiveness, and resolve sincerely to be careful in future otherwise it is going to cost you very dear in the life to come.

Lesson 9

Good Manners And Noble Qualities

Good manners and noble quilities of mind and character enjoy a place of crucial importance in the structure of Islamic teaching. Moral evolution and uplift was one of the main objects for which the sacred Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) was raised up. The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) himself has said:

"I have been sent down by Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) to teach moral virtues and to evolve them to highest perfection."

Importance

An idea of the supreme importance Islam attaches to the cultivation of good manners and noble moral qualities can be obtained from the under-mentioned Traditions of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) :

"The best of you are those who posses the best of manners."

"On the Day of Recompense nearest to me will be one who display in one's daily life the best of manners."

"On the day of Reckoning the most weighty item in the Balance of Deeds, will be good manners."

Once a Companion asked the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam), "What is there that takes a Muslim to paradise?" The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) replied, "Fear of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and good manners."

The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam), again, is reported to have said, "A Muslim with good manners and good moral disposition gets the same reward as he who fasts (permanently) during the days and spends his nights in prayers."

The last Tradition tells that a believer who possesses good manners and carries out scrupulously the moral duties imposed on him by Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) but does not engage himself much in fasts and prayers attains the degree of excellecne of the man who stands up in prayer all night and fasts all day long.

The Curse of Bad Manners

We have been warned by the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) in an equally forceful manner against the curse of bad manners. He has said:

"A man with bad manners and a bad moral conduct shall not enter Paradise."

"No sin is more detestable to Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) than bad manners."

Some More Important Virtues

Though in the Holy Quraan and the Traditions we are taught to cultivate all good and noble moral and social qualities and to avoid everything that is mean or wicked, here we will take up only such virtues that are more important and without which no one can hope to be a good Muslim and a true believer.

Truthfulness:

Truthfulness is a matter of such supreme consequence in Islam that in addition to speaking the truth always a Muslim is exhorted also to keep company only with those who are truthful. The Holy Quraan states:

"O ye who believe fear Allah and be only with those who are true (in word and deed).

يَاأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَكُونُوا مَعَ الصَّادِقِينَ ۝
(التوبة ١٥)

(IX:119)

Says the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam):

"He who wishes to love Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and His Apostle, or wishes Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and His apostle to love him, must take care to speak nothing but the truth whenever he speaks."

"Speak the truth even if you see your ruin or death in it, for, surely, salvation and life lie alone in truth, and avoid falsehood even if it may hold out to you the promise of success and salvation, for, the end of falsehood is nothing but failure and frustration."

Once the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) was asked, "What is the hallmark of the dwellers of Paradise?" The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) replied, "Truthfulness."

Conversely, another Tradition reads:

"To be a liar is one of the special signs of a hypocrite."

It was asked of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) whether a believer could be a coward. He said, "It is possible." It was asked whether a believer could be a miser. He said. "It is possible." Again, it was asked of him whether a believer could be a liar. He said, "No". (The idea was that a believer in Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) could not develop the filthy habit of lying. Faith could never acomodate falsehood; they could not go together).

Fulfilling Promises

It is also a part of truthfulness that when a promise is made it should be fulfilled. The Holy Quraan and Traditions are very clear on the point. Our faith demands of us never to go back on our pledged word. States the Holy Quraan:

And fulfil (every) engagement, for (every) enggement will be enquired into (on the Day of Reckoning).

(XVII : 34)

وَاَوْفُوْا بِالْعَهْدِ اِنَّ الْعَهْدَ كَانَ مَسْئُوْلًا (بنی اسرآئیل ع ۴)

To fulfil the contracts which ye have made.

(II : 177)

وَالْمُوْفُوْنَ بِعَهْدِهِمْ اِذَا عَاهَدُوْا ج (البقرة ع ۲۲)

And the Traditions say:

"He who does not fulfil promises made by him has no share in the faith."

"Not to fulfil one's promises is a special sign of a hypocrite."

Trustworthiness

Closely allied to truthfulness is the quality of trustworthiness. It is an important branch of truthfulness. Islam has laid a special emphasis on it also. Here is what the Holy Qurran says :

Allah doth command you to render back your Trusts to those to whom they are due.

(IV : 58)

اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يَاْمُرُكُمْ اَنْ تُؤَدُّوا الْاَمٰنٰتِ اِلٰٓى اَهْلِهَا (النساء ع ۸)

On two occassions in Holy Quraan, it has been mentioned in the qualities of true believers; and the people who safegaurd the trusts and their promisses (i.e. pay back the trusts and fulfil the promises)

(Surah Moominun & Surah Ma'aarij)

It is reported that Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) often used to say in his Sermons;

"O People ! In whom there is no trustworthiness, in him there is, so to speak, no faith."

In one Tradition Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) says :

"Look not alone at anyone's prayers and fasts to decide about his spiritual excellence (i.e. do not be impressed by anyone's spirituality simply because you find him devout in his prayers and fasts.) You should also see that he is truthful when he speaks, restores honestly what he has received in trust to whom it is due, and remains righteous in times of adversity and suffering."

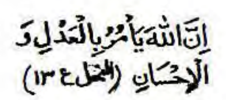
My dear Muslims! If we want to be a true believer in the sight of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), too, and want to be claimant of His blessings, it is necessary to adopt trustworthiness and honesty in every case and to make the fulfilment of promises the principle of life.

Rememebr, one amongst us, who does not have these qualities he is not a true believer and complete Muslim in front of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and His Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam).

Justice

Justice is an integral part of Islamic ethics. We must practise it in all spheres of life. The Holy Quraan states :

Allah commands justice and doing of good.
(XVI : 90)



In Islam we are commanded to be just and fair not only towards our own people or co-religionists but also towards others even if they be the enemies of our life, property or faith. It is candidly stated in the Holy Quraan that :

And let not the hatred of others to you make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. Be just that is next to Taqwaa (piety).
(V : 8)



The above verse enjoins justice to those also, individuals as well as communities, who may be harbouring ill-will against us. Otherwise, we are sure to incur the displeasure of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and become grievous sinners and criminals in His sight.

To refer now to some of the Trditions :

"The most beloved of men in the sight of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) on the Day of Resurrection, and the nearest to Him, shall be the just ruler, and the most hateful of men in the sight of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) on the Day of Resurrection, and the farthest removed from Him, shall be the tyrannical ruler."

The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) is reported to have enquired one day from the Companions. "Do you know who will be the first to come under the shadow of Divine Mercy on the Day of Requital?" The Companions replied, " Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and His Apostle know best."

The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) then said, "They will be those who accept their rights when offered to them and give willingly the rights of other when they demand for their rights, and who judge in respect of others exactly as they would in respect of themselves."

The Pity is that we ourselves have forgotten the glorious teachings of Islam. If we can produce these qualities in us today and become truthful in word and deed, and honest in the matter of our trusts and promises, and just and fair in our dealings with others, the success of the world is bound to kiss our feet and we will attain a high place in the paradise, too.

Compassion and Forgiveness

To feel pity on a fellow human being in distress, to be compassionately drawn towards him, to bring him succour, to pardon the guilty and the fault are virtues which are valued very highly in Islam. Take these Traditions, for instance :

"Show kindness, and kindness will be shown to you; forgive, and you will be forgiven."

"They will not obtain the mercy of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) in whose hearts there is no feeling of kindliness for others."

"His sins will not be forgiven by Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) who does not forgive the fault of others."

"Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) will have mercy upon them that are merciful. Treat kindly the dwellers of the earth, He who dwells in the heavens will treat you kindly."

It is apparent from the last Tradition that our kindliness and gentleness are not to be confined to our own people alone. We ought to be kind and compassionate towards friend and foe alike and to all the creatures that exist on the earth.

It is reported from the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) that once a person who was travelling by road saw a dog licking wet earth in the agony of its thirst. The traveller was moved by the spectacle and gave water to the dog to drink. This simple service of the man to the thirsting dog pleased Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) so much that He blessed him with salvation.

Tenderness

Tenderness in transactions, and in all other fields of one's activity, and the readiness to oblige and to put others at ease are all virtues of the highest order in the Islamic pattern of morality. We will reproduce two Traditions of the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) in

support of our contention. Said he :

"Hell's fire is forbidden for those that are mild and gentle and make it easy for others to deal with them."

"Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) is compassionate and likes compassion in His creatures. He grants more to the kind and the tender-hearted than to those who are harsh and severe."

Self-Restraint

Tolerance, affability, self-restraint, and the ability to control one's temper and to overlook what is unpleasant and disagreeable are qualities that Islam wants everyone to cultivate. Believers who possess these fine moral attributes hold a very high place in the sight of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa).

In the Holy Quraan where the blessed ones are mentioned for whom the paradise has been laid out such people are specifically referred to :

Who restrain anger and pardon all men.

(111 : 134)



Said the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) :

"Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) will hold back His punishment from him who will hold back his anger."

Blessed indeed, are men who remember these verses and Traditions during moments of provocatian and exercise restraint, and , in return, Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) holds His chastisement away from them!

Gentleness of Speech

Gentleness of speech is a religious virtue in Islam and rudeness a sin. The Holy Quraan declares :

And speak fair to the People.
(II : 83)

وَقُولُوا لِلنَّاسِ حُسْنًا (البقرة ع ١٠)

We have it from the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) that :

"To speak politely is Taqwaa and kind of charity,"

"To indulge in intemperate language and in harsh behaviour is to perpetrate an injustice and the home of injustice is Hell."

"Rudeness in speech is hypocrisy (i.e., the quality of a hypocrite)."

Humility

Humility is a virtue Islam wants its followers to practise as a distinguishing feature of their moral and spiritual behaviour. It does not become a Muslim to be haughtly or vainglorious.

Greatness with Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) is not for those who look down upon others. Instead, it belongs to those who desist from thinking too highly of themselves and practise meekness and humility. In the words of the Holy Quraan.

And the servants of the Most Gracious (Allah Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) are those who walk on the earth in humility. *(XXV : 63)*

وَعِبَادُ الرَّحْمٰنِ الَّذِينَ يَمْشُونَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ هَوْنًا (الفرقان ع ٦)

*That **Home** of **the** Hereafter We shall **give to** those who intend **not** highhandedness or mischief **on earth**.*
(XXVIII : 83)

تِلْكَ الدَّارُ الْآخِرَةُ نَجْعَلُهَا لِلَّذِينَ لَا يُرِيدُونَ عُلُوًّا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فَسَادًا (القصص ع ٨)

The Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) has said :

"He who observes humility Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) will make him so exalted that, ultimately, he will attain the highest grade in Paradise."

On the other hand, pride is so greatly repugnant to Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) that the sacred Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) has warned us, again and again, aginst it in such strong words :

"Whoever has pride in his heart even of the weight of an atom shall be cast head-long into the Hell by Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa).

"Whoever has pride in his heart even of the weigh of the weight of a mustard seed [1], shall not be enterd into paradise."

"Beware of pride! Pride was the sin which first of all ruined the Devil."

May Almighty Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) save us all from the Satanic evil of pride, and endow our hearts and minds with meekness and humility which He admires so much and which is the symbol of His slaves.

It needs, however, to be remembered that it is demanded of us to practise meekness and humility in our personal matters and not in matters where truth or faith is involved. When it comes to faith or truth we must be bold and outsopoken and give the fullest proof of courage and firmness, for this is the Will of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) for such occasions.

The way of a Muslim, in sum, is that while he is meek and humble

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1. The word occuring in the original is 'Raa-Ee' (sinapis ramosa) which is a kind of mustard seed with very small grains.-Translator

in his own individual sphere of existence, he is firm like a rock and allows neither fear nor weakness to come near him where faith or truth or justice is at stake.

Courage and Fortitude

There occur periods of hardship and adversity in the lives of men. Sometimes there is need, sometimes there is disease, sometimes our enemies harass us. And, so forth. For such situations the teaching of Islam is that we should bear them with courage and fortitude, remain firm and stout of heart and do not waver from our principles inspite of a thousand trials and calamities that may assail us. For such men there is the assurance of the Holy Quraan that they are the Beloved of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)

For Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) loves those who are patient and persevering.
(111:146)

وَاللّٰهُ يُحِبُّ الصّٰبِرِيْنَ ۔
(آل عمران ع ۱۵)

Allah surely, is with those who patiently persevere.
(11:153)

اِنَّ اللّٰهَ مَعَ الصّٰبِرِيْنَ ۔
(البقرہ ع ۱۹)

And to be firm and patient in pain (or suffering) and adversity and through all periods of panic. Such are the people of truth, and the people who are Allah-fearing.
(II:177)

وَالصّٰبِرِيْنَ فِى الْبَاْسَآءِ وَ
الضَّرَّآءِ وَحِيْنَ الْبَاْسِ ؕ
اُولٰٓئِكَ الَّذِيْنَ صَدَقُوْا ؕ
وَاُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْمُتَّقُوْنَ ۝
(البقرہ ع ۲۲)

And the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) says:

"No boon conferred on man more precious than that of patience."

"Patience is one-half of faith."

Contrarily, impatience, chicken-heartedness and cowardice are the most lamentable of evils against which the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) used to beg Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) for refuge in his prayers.

Sincerity

Sincerity is the life and soul of the entire moral edifice of Islam, nay, of Islam itself. By sincerity we mean that all our deeds and actions should solely be for the sake of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and prompted by no other urge than to earn His approbation. Apart from it, there must be no other desire, motive or intention behind whatever we do.

Monotheism which is the arch-stone of Islam attains fulfilment through sincerity. Faith in Divine Unity remains imperfect unless all our acts are performed wholly for the sake of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), and we have no other objective before us while carrying them out except winning of Divine pleasure and reward. States the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam):

"He who loves or hates, offers favours or withholds them, and whatever he does, does so for the sake of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) he perfects his faith."

It shows that a perfect Muslim in the sight of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) is only he who succeeds in subordinating his entire conduct, his social relations and all his other affairs to the Will of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and is not influenced in them by his personal desire or likes or dislikes or by any other urges or impulsions.

Another Tradition reads:

"Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) is not regardful of your fine visages or your wealth. He is regardful only of your hearts and intentions."

The idea of the above Tradition is that Allah (Subhaanahu

Wata'aalaa) will judge and requit on the basis of our motives and intentions.

Now, here is a Tradition with which we propose to round off the present discussion. About this Tradition it is reported that Hadhrat Abu Hurairah often used to faint while he related it. It says:

"The first of those who shall be called to account, on the Day of Resurrection, shall be one who had learned the whole of the Holy Quraan by heart, and he who had been killed in the way of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), and he who had an abundance of wealth. Then shall Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) say to him who had got the whole of the Holy Quraan by heart, " Did I not teach thee what revealed to my Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) ?" He will say, "Yes , my Lord !" Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) will ask, "And what hast thou done with regard to what thou didst learn therein?" He will say, "I was constantly at it in the hours of night and in the hours of day. I learn it myself and taught it to others, and I did it all for Thy sake alone". Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) will say, "Thou art a liar; thou didst only desire that men should say that such a one was a recieter of the Holy Quraan and that has been said already".

"And the master of wealth shall be brought before Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), and He shall say, "Did I not give thee an abundance of wealth, so that thou wast not in want of anything ?" He will say, "Yes, my Lord ! Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) will say, "And what hast thou done with what I gave thee? "He will answer, "I regarded the rights of kinship and gave alms and I did so for Thy sake." Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) will say,"Thou art a liar; thou didst desire that men should say that such a one was a generous man, and that has been said already."

"Then shall he who had been killed in the way of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) be brought before Him, and Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) will say to him, "What was it that thou wast killed for?" He will reply, "Thou didst bid us to do Jihad in Thy way

and I fought and was killed." Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) will say, "Thou art a liar; thou didst desire that men should say that such a one was a valiant man, and that has been said already."

"These are the three men who, of all creatures shall be first sent into Fire."

Brothers ! Now, let us examine our thuoghts and deeds in the light of the above Tradition and see where do we stand in the sight of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) !

O Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! Endue our hearts with sincerity and set right our motives and intentions and make us Thy devoted and dedicated slaves.

Lesson 10

الايمان
و
محبة اللّٰه ومحبة رسوله

Love of Allah, (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) and The Faith

Islam requires of us to believe in Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and His Apostle and to observe Salaah, Saum, Zakaah and Hajj, and to lead a life of piety, honesty, goodness, gentleness, moral and social rectitude and self-discipline. In the same way, it is also one of its fundamental teachings that we should hold Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) and the Faith dearer to our hearts than everything else, may it be our parents, children, life, honour or property. In simple words what it means is that should a time come when it may involve the risk of life, honour or property or of any other worldly thing or interest to abide by the faith of Islam and to remain loyal to the injunctions of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) then we must not break away from Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) and the Faith irrespective of what the consequences may be.

It has been stressed repeatedly in the Holy Quraan and the Traditions that those who may claim to be Muslims but do not possess as strong a devotion for Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) and the Faith as these are in fact, are not true Muslims. What is more, they are deserving of Divine chastisement. Reads surah Taubah:

Say: " If it be that your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your mates, or your kindred: the wealth that ye have gained; the commerce in which ye fear a decline; or the dwellings in which ye delight, are dearer to you than Allah, and His Apostle, or the striving in His cause; then wait until Allah brings about His decision; and Allah guides not the rebellious."

(IX: 24)

قُلْ إِنْ كَانَ آبَاؤُكُمْ وَأَبْنَاؤُكُمْ
وَإِخْوَانُكُمْ وَأَزْوَاجُكُمْ وَ
عَشِيرَتُكُمْ وَأَمْوَالٌ
اقْتَرَفْتُمُوهَا وَتِجَارَةٌ تَخْشَوْنَ
كَسَادَهَا وَمَسَاكِنُ تَرْضَوْنَهَا
أَحَبَّ إِلَيْكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَ
رَسُولِهِ وَجِهَادٍ فِي سَبِيلِهِ
فَتَرَبَّصُوا حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ اللَّهُ
بِأَمْرِهِ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي
الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقِينَ (التوبة ٢٤)

Those who love their parents or children or life or honour or property more than they love Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and care more for their protection or well-being than for His pleasure and the defence and progress of His faith are unquestionably disloyal to Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and worthy of His punishment. A Tradition say:

" He alone will taste the sweetnecs of the faith who possesses these three qualities: the love of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) come to him before everything else; he loves whom he loves for the sake of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa); the idea of going back to apostasy after he has embraced Islam is as repugnant to him as being thrown into the fire."

In the sight of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) a true and genuine Muslim is a person whose devotion to Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and His Apostle (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) and the Faith is stronger than to anyother person or thing in the world so much so that when he loves another human being he loves him for the sake of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), and who is so sincerely and powerfully attached to the Islamic faith that the very thought of leaving it and reverting back to apostasy may be as painful to him as being cast into the fire.

Says the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam): " None of you can be an honest Muslim and a true believer unless his love for me exceeds the love he has for his parents, children or any other human being in the world."

Brothers! Islam, really is nothing besides surrender and submission to Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) with all one's heart and soul and the readiness to sacrifice every attachment, belonging or interest for the sake of the Faith as the holy Companions had done and as the state is of the true and devoted servants of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) even today, however small may their number be. May we also be one of them!

Lesson 11 الدعوة والتبليغ

Preaching And Propagation

Essential as it is for us to affirm faith in Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) and to follow with righteousness and sincerity the straight path of Islam, it is also important that we strove earnestly to guide the others, too, to the path of the faith who are ignorant of it or who may be unwilling to adopt it on account of prejudice or spiritual malaise. As Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) has placed on us the duty of being His pious, devout and faithful servants so also has He made it obligatory for us to work among His other creatures as well towards the same end, that is, towards making them also His pious, devout and faithful servants. That is what is meant by the service of faith and its preaching and propagation.

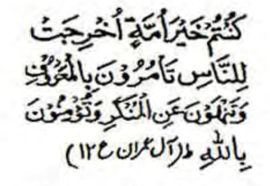
This work is so great in the sight of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) that for it He sent down thousands of Prophets into the world. The Prophets bore tremenduos hardships and went through the severest of trials and privations to carry out their mission. They worked for the moral and spiritual reform and uplift of mankind. May the eternal blessings of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) be on them and on their companions and supporters.

The glorious chain of Prophecy and Apostleship ended with the last of the prophets, Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam). Through him also Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) proclaimed to the world that no more prophets would now be raised up for the guidance of humanity. The celestial mission shall now be carried on by those who had accepted his guidance and the religion he had brought with

him into the world.

In sum, after the termination of the luminous line of Apostles the responsibility for preaching and propagation of faith and religious instruction and reform of mankind has fallen wholly upon the shoulders of the followers of the sacred Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam). This honour, indeed, is unique. In the Holy Quraan, the very object of the raising up of Muslim has been defined as nothing but this:

You are the best of Peoples, evolved for mankind, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong and believing in Allah (III:110)



The Muslims were, thus, superior to all other peoples and communities for the simple reason that they, in addition to adopting for themselves the path of faith and righteousness, were charged with the special duty of striving to bring others also to practise what was right and to avoid what was wrong. It was because of this that they were given the distinction of being the "Best of Peoples". It is also evident from the above verse that should the Muslim fail to discharge the function they would not only forfeit the claim to the distinction but would also render themselves liable to be punished by Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) for neglecting the duty. He had assigned to them. Let us take an illustration: suppose a company of sentries is posted in a town by the Government to check the immoral activities of its citizens and the sentries not only fail to perform their duty but, what is more, they themselves begin to indulge in the transgressions they were required to suppress. Now, will they be retained in service and rewarded by the Government or taken severely to task by it for their negligence and misconduct ? It will, certainly, not be improper or unjust if they were punished more severely than the other offenders.

The conditions prevailing in the entire Muslim world today are so extermely deplorable that what to speak of the preaching of the faith

and the correction and reform of others, not more than five or ten per cent of Muslims themselves are true to Islam and do good deed and abstain from what is evil and prohibited. In these circumstances, it becomes our primary duty to carry out the mission of moral and spirtual reform and guidance among our own people, among such sections of them as have drifted mournfully away from the path of faith and moral uprightness.

One of the reasons for it is that those who call themselves, or are known as Muslims, whatever be the practical state, have, after all, forged a link between themeselves and Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and His Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) and the Faith, and become members of the Muslim brotherhood or Ummah, through the acceptance of Islam. Solicitude for their moral and spiritual well-being is our first responsiblity in any case in the same way as the responsibility of looking after the welfare of his own children and near relations is greater on a man than that of looking after the welfare of others.

And, secondly, before everything else, it is the actual condition of Muslims from which the world will generally judge about Islam, and the spectacle of degeneration that Muslims, on the whole, present these days is such that it cannot be expected to make a very favourable impression on anyone in respect of their faith. The non-Muslim world is not likely to think very highly of the excellent teachings of Islam as long as Muslims remain what they are today. On the other hand, it is a feeling of revulsion and dislike which non-Muslims usually get about Islam when they look at the lower degree of moral and spiritual level into which the Muslims have sunk. It has always been like this. People have always formed their opinion, good or bad or indifferent, about a religion from the actual moral and social state of its followers.

In the past when Muslims used to be true Muslims, observing strictly the postulates of their faith, people were attracted towards Islam simply by seeing them. Whole nations and communities were converted to Islam in this way. But since the Muslims are only in name; their conduct and morals grew un-Islamic and their hearts got

bereft of faith and righteousness the world has developed a prejudice against Islam itself.

In fine, we should realise the truth of it clearly that the daily life of Muslims, their social, moral and spiritual conduct and behaviour, is the biggest testimony and the chief measuring rod with regard to Islam. If the practical life of Muslims is good, the world will form a good opinion about Islam, and if it is bad, the opinion the world will acquire about Islam will also be bad. In later case, the preaching of Islam among non-Muslims is destined to be fruitless. Hence, the success of all the efforts aimed at the propagation of Islam among non-Muslims as well is dependent on the condition that Islamic life. i.e., the life of faith and righteous action became the chief attribute of the entire Muslim community. From this point of view also it is necessary to strive first for the guidance and reformation of Muslims and to launch the struggle with all our might for popularising the values of Islamic life among them before we turned our attention to others.

Islam has given the task of religious preaching, reform and guidance the name of Jihad-i-Akbar, the great Jihad [1]. If it is undertaken in the right spirit, with sincerity and selflessness and solely for the sake of winning Divine approbation, this work, definitely, is a great Jihad in the sight of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa).

Many people suppose that that Jihad means only a war which is waged in the path of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and according to the rules and instructions laid down for it in the Shariah. But this is not correct. The truth is that whatever endeavour that can be made at a particular time for the preachig and propagation of Islam and the moral and spiritual correction and guidance of mankind is the Jihad of the age.

The Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) remained in Makkah for about twelve years after the mantle of Apostleship had

1. The commentators of the Holy Quraan are generally agreed that the verse ("Strive against them with the utmost strenousness (with the Holy Quraan)") of Surah Furqaan means the preaching and propagatin of Islam.

fallen upon him. During this period the Jihad of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) and his Companions consisted altogether in adhering steadfastly to the faith inspite of the terribel persecution unleashed on them by the enemies of Islam and in doing all that lay in their power, openly as well as secretly, to spread the Divine message of Islam and to reform morally and spirtually those who lived around them.

To devote oneself to the noble task of guiding the ignorant, the way ward and the thoughtless to the straight path of Islam and of bringing them nearer to Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), to spend one's time and money on it, and to sacrifice one's comfort, all this, in any case, is Jihad in Divine estimation. In fact, it is the Jihad of the present age.

The rich reward that awaits those in the Hereafter who engage themselves in this lofty endeavour as well as the dreadful punishment that is going to fall to the lot of those who neglect it and do not participate in it can well be imagined from the Traditions we give below :

"A person who guides another to a deed of virtue shall receive the same recompense for it as the doer of the deed and there will be no reduction in the reward of the doer himself because of it."

What the Tradition means is that suppose ten persons, or even five, were reformed through our effort and they came to believe in Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) and to observe the Divine commandments – they began to offer the Salaah and to carry out other religious duties and avoided what was wrong and forbidden then the reward they will earn on it jointly will be granted to us alone also. A little thought will show that there is simply no other way in which a person can win so much reward – the reward of the prayers and other pious and virtuous deeds of hundreds of men.

Another Tradition of the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe

Wasallam) says :

"By the Almighty in whose power lies my life, do not neglect the duty of "enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong. Remember if you neglected your duty it is quite possible that Allah might send down His punishment on you and then all your prayers and supplications will avail you nothing."

Brothers! Some of the most enlightened and spiritually evolved divines of our day are of the view that the disasters and humiliations that Muslim have been facing for a long time, and the troubles and difficulties they are caught in universally these days and which do not seem to abate or relent a bit inspite of all their pathetic petitions to Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and prayers etc., are due mainly to the very reason that they have ceased to discharge the function they were raised up for and for which they were made wholly responsible after the termination of Prophecy and Apostleship. Evidently, when a watchman fails to perform his duty he is dismissed from service and castigated sternly for his negligence. Let us resolve solemnly that we shall be found wanting no more in the discharge of our duty. Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)'s help will be with us. He has promised :

Allah, certainly, will aid those who aid His Cause.

(XXII : 40)

Lesson 12

الثبات والاستقامة

Constancy

One of the special responsibililites a man owes to Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) once he has accepted the faith of Islam is that he remains firm and steadfast in his faith at all times and in all circumstances. He is expected to uphold the faith with all his courage and strength, however, adverse the conditions may be. He must not prove disloyal to Islam in any event. He must not give it up. This is what is meant by 'constancy of faith'. Such men have been spoken of very highly in the Holy Quraan and a bountiful reward has been promised to them in the Hereafter . It says :

In the case of Those who say, "Our Lord is Allah, and, further, stand straight and steadfast, the angels descend on them (from time to time): "Fear ye not" (they suggest), "Nor grieve! But receive the tidings of the Garden (of Bliss) which ye were promised ! We are your protectors in this life and in the Hereafter ! Therein shall ye have all that your souls will desire! Therein shall ye have all that ye ask for ! A hospitable gift from One, Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful
(XLI : 30-31)

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ
ثُمَّ اسْتَقَامُوا تَتَنَزَّلُ
عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ أَلَّا تَخَافُوا
وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَبْشِرُوا بِالْجَنَّةِ
الَّتِي كُنتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ ۝
نَحْنُ أَوْلِيَاؤُكُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ
الدُّنْيَا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ
(حم السجدة ٤١)

What wonderful tiding does the above verse contain for those who are constant in faith and who patiently preserve and remain steadfast in times of misfortune and peril. If one could attain this position even at the cost of one's life, property and everything it would not be a bad

bargain indeed.

It is related that once a Companion asked the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) to tell him something that could suffice for him always and after which he would not have the need to turn for advice to anyone. The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) said, "Say, Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) (alone) is my Lord", and stick to it (i.e., conduct your life in accordance with it unswervingly)."

For our benefit and guidance a number of extermely inspiring parables have been narrated in the Holy Quraan of devout and faithful servants of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) who remained true to faith in circumstances of utmost distress and suffering. Neither fear nor greed could make them deviate from the path they had chosen. One such parable is of the Magicians of Egypt who were summoned to challenge Prophet Moses (Alaihis Salaam) and great rewards and honours had been promised to them. Yet after the truth of Divine inspiration and the Apostolic message of Moses (Alaihis Salaam) had dawned upon them, they cared neither for the riches and honours the Pharaoh had promised nor for the savage punishemnt they were sure to receive at his hands for disobeying his commands. Rising above the considerations of gain or loss, they boldly declared before the vast assembly of men, "We believe in the Lord of Aaron and Moses." Later, when they were threatened by that enemy of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), the Pharaoh, that he would have their arms and legs severed and then they would be hanged on the gallows they replied dauntlessly, displaying magnificent courage of conviction that:

"So decree whatever thou desirest to decree : for thou canst, decree (touching) only the life of this world. For us we have believed in our Lord: may He forgives us our sins.

(XX : 72-73)



Still more inspiring is the story of Pharaoh's wife. You know that Pharaoh was the all-powerful monarch of Egypt whose wife was the sole mistress of his heart. From this you can imagine how enviable would have been her lot. All the world's glories and luxuries were at her feet. Yet when the innermost depths of her soul were stirred by the Divine call of Moses (Alaihis Salaam), she did not give a thought to what her husband would do to her or how her life of cloudless bliss would change into one of colossal distress and misery. Regardless of the consequences she proclaimed her faith and once she had done so she flinched not from the path of duty towards Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and religion although the torture she was subjected to was truly barbarous, the very idea of which is enough to make our flesh creep even today. In return for it, such a unique honour was conferred on her by Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) that her name has been mentiond reverentially in the Holy Quraan and the patient perseverance displayed by her and her sacrifice have been held forth as an example to all Muslims.

And Allah sets forth, as an example to those who believe, the wife of Pharaoh: behold, she said !"Build for me in nearness to Thee, a mansion in the Garden, and save me from Pharaoh and his doings, and save me from those that do wrong.
(LXVI : II)

وَضَرَبَ اللّٰهُ مَثَلًا لِّلَّذِيْنَ
اٰمَنُوا امْرَاَتَ فِرْعَوْنَ اِذْ قَالَتْ
رَبِّ ابْنِ لِيْ عِنْدَكَ بَيْتًا
فِي الْجَنَّةِ وَنَجِّنِيْ مِنْ فِرْعَوْنَ
وَعَمَلِهٖ وَنَجِّنِيْ مِنَ الْقَوْمِ
الظّٰلِمِيْنَ ۝ (التحريم ع٢)

Glory be ! What rare honour, what matchless distinction, really, that Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) has chosen for the constancy of faith of that blessed lady to serve as an example to the entire Ummah, from Hadhrat Abu Bakr down to the last generation of Muslims before the Last Day.

It is related that when the atrocities perpetrated by the Polytheists of Makkah on Muslims exceeded all limits and the Companions

approached the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) to pray to Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) for mercy and protection, the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) remarked, "You have become disheartened so soon ! Men of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) before you were subjected to such brutal torture that combs of red hot iron were driven into their heads and the skulls of some of them were sawed off into two and yet they remained steadfast and did not abandon their faith."

Lesson 13

الجهاد

Jihad

The believers are required emphatically to do whatever they can towards popularising, defending and keeping alive and flourishing, as the best and the truest way of life, the way of Islam and servility to Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) they have chosen for themselves. This, in Islam, is called Jihad. It can take many forms depending on the circumstances varying from time to time and place to place.

Suppose there arises a situation in which it becomes difficult or even dangerous for a person or his family or community to profess Islam and to remain true to it. To be a Muslim may become the hardest thing to do in the world. In that case, Jihad will lie in doing one's best for oneself, one's family or community to stay firmly devoted ot Islam. It would, certainly, be a most splendid Jihad in those circumstances. Similarly, should Muslims, through their own folly or negligence, start drifting away from the faith, then, at such a time, to devote one's time and energy to their religious revival and reform, too, would constitute a kind of Jihad.

To carry the Divine guidance to those who are ignorant of it and to make an earnest effort to persuade them wisely and sympathetically to accept it is yet another form of Jihad.

Should believers in Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) be in power somewhere and the conditions demand that collective force be used for the defence and assistance of the faith, then, in that case, the use of force for the defence and assistance of faith according to the rules laid down for it, will constitute Jihad. Two conditions, however, are essential for it. Firstly, such a step must not be motivated by any personal or national

self-interest, greed or enmity. It should be taken solely to carry out the command of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and to serve the cause of His faith. And, secondly, that the rules prescribed for it are scrupulously observed. If force is used without the fulfilment of these conditions, it will not be Jihad according to Islam but wanton wickedness and mischief.

To speak a just word before a tyrannical ruler (be he a Muslim or a non-Muslim) is, again, a form of Jihad. In the Traditions it has been spoken as "the best of Jihad."

All these forms of religious struggle and endeavour, at their proper time and place, are among the obligatory duties of Islam, and, as we have seen the term Jihad is applied to them in various degrees.

We now proceed to examine some of the verses of the Holy Quraan and Traditions of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) enjoining on Muslims the duty of Jihad and revealing to them what unique glory and spiritual merit lies in it. It is said in a Quraanic verse:

And strive in His cause as ye ought to strive (with sincerity and under discipline). He has chosen you.

(XXII : 78)

وَجَاهِدُوا فِي اللَّهِ حَقَّ جِهَادِهِ هُوَ اجْتَبَاكُمْ (الحج ١٠٤)

Another Quraanic verse is translated as :

O ye who believe ! Shall I lead you to a bargain that will save you from a grievous penalty? That ye believe in Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and His Apostle, and that ye strive (your utmost) in the cause of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), with your property and your persons: that will be best for ye if ye but knew ! He will forgive ye your sins and admit ye to Gardens beneath which rivers flow, and to beautiful mansions in Garden of Eternity: that is, indeed, the Supreme Achievement. *(LXI : 10-12)*

After these, the Traditions :

"To believe truthfully in Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and to strive in the cause of Faith is the best of all deeds."

"It shall not be that a person whose feet are covered with dust in the path of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) went to Hell."

"For anyone of you to rise in the way of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) (i.e., in the defence of Islam and to take some part in the struggle for its progress and glory) is better than seventy years of worship in the corner of his house.

May it be allotted to us also by Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) to earn the Divine reward that is for those who make earnest exertions in the path of His faith!

Lesson 14

القتل في سبيل الله

Martyrdom

In the special language of Islam a person who meets his death in the path of faith either as a result of obeying its injunctions and carrying out its commands as a staunch and devoted follower or in the course of struggle for its defence is called a martyr. It is said in the Holy Quraan that Martyrs should not be thought of as dead: they are alive, a very special existence is conferred on them and they are the recipients of boundless favours and blessings from their Lord.

Think not of those who are slain in Allah's way as dead. Nay, they live, finding their sustenance in the Presence of their Lord.

(III : 169)



How marvellous is the fate of these true and noble sons of Islam, how mightily beloved of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) they are and what glorious rewards are showered upon them by Him can be visualised from the Tradition we are going now to reproduce. The Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) is reported to have said:

"No one among the dwellers of the Paradise will ever want to be sent back to the world, although all the worldly joys and riches may be his if he is sent back, except one who had been killed in the way of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa); such a man will want to be returned to the earth and killed in the cause of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) ten times over because of the high honour and splendid ceremony with which he will be received in the Heaven on account of dying a martyr's death.

The sacred Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) himself was so enthusiastic about attaining martyrdom that he used often to say:

"By the Holy Being in whose power lies my life, I wish I was killed in Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)'s way and brought back to life and killed once more and brought back to life and that this happened to me over and over again." Another of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam)'s Traditions read :

"Six rewards are conferred on a martyr by Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) : one, he is forgiven immediately and his abode in the Paradise is shown to him; two, he is spared the punishment of the grave; third, he is granted freedom from the acute fear and anxiety of the Day of Requital that will grip the heart of every one ("except of those on whom there will be the favour of the Lord); four, a crown of honour will be placed on his head, a single ruby of which will be more valuable than the whole world; five, seventy-two celestial brides will be given to him in marriage; and, six, his intercession will be accepted on behalf of seventy kinsmen."

Furthermore :

"To fall a martyr in the cause of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) atones for everything except a debt."

And, it should be remembered that the Divine reward and other wonderful favours promised on martyrdom are not dependent only on death occuring in the way of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa). It is not that when a person is killed in the cause of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) only then does he become entitled to them. Every loss or injury suffered, every pain and suffering undergone, in the service of the faith carries a bounteous reward. Any believer who may be persecuted, punished, beaten, insulted or tortured for the sake of Islam will be rewarded most lavishly in the Hereafter. Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) will raise him so high in honour that the most exalted of saints and divines will envy his fate. Just as soldiers, in this world, who

serve their motherland gallantly and care nothing for their own safety when the call of duty comes, are honoured with awards and decorations by their governments in the same way the servants of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) who suffer loss or humiliation for the sake of faith occupy a special place of glory in the celestial scheme of things. On the Day of Recompense when these blessed children of Islam will receive their awards and decorations and Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), the Almighty will honour them with His exquisite favours and bounties, all the rest of men will regretfully wish that they, too, had undergone a similar experience in the world, that they, too, had been punished, tortured and humiliated for the sake of faith so that they would also get those magnificent favours and rewards on the Day.

Should a trial of this kind be destined for us as well, O Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), at that fateful hour, keep us brave and steadfast and withhold not from us Thy grace !

Lesson 15

البعث بعد الموت

Life After Death

This much is known to everyone that whoever is born into the world has got to die one day or the other. But nobody knows on his own what happens or will happen after death. This is known only to Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa). Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) vouchsafe the knowledge of it to His Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) and through the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) men like you and me also come to know about it. Every prophet of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), in his time, had revealed clearly to his people through what stages they would have to pass after death and how at each stage they would be recompensed for their deeds – good as well as bad – during their earthly sojourn. Since Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) is the last of the Divine Apostles and Messengers and no prophet is going to be raised up after him, the different stages through which a man has to pass after death have been explained by him in greatest detail and with utmost clarity. If all that the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) has revealed in this conection is brought together it would make a volume by itself. We will, therefore, give a very brief summary of it over here.

There are to follow three stages after death. The first stage runs from death to Resurrection. It is called *Barzakh*[1]. Whether a person is buried when he dies or he is cremated or cast into the river, his soul does not perish with him. It is immortal; it lives. It only migrates from this material world of ours to anothers world. In this other world the angels question him about his spiritual state. If he is a true believer, he gives the correct answers; whereupon the angels impart to him the glad tidings that he is going to live in peace and happiness till the Last Day. And if it is otherwise, that is, he is an unbeliever, an infidel or a sham or hypocritical Muslim, he is, at once, placed under dreadful

1. The interval between death and resurrection-Translator

punishment which is not to cease before the Day of Reckoning.

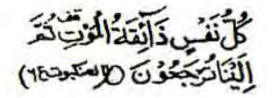
The next stage comprised of the Last Day and the Resurrection. The Last Day means that there will come a time when the entire material world will be destroyed by the command of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), anihilation will descend suddenly on everything that exists around us. The whole world will be thrown topsyturvy. Then, after a long time, when Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) will wish, all men will be raised up again. Every person born into the world will be re-created and called upon to render a full account of his doings on the earth. In the Great Reckoning, those who will be found worthy of deliverance will be awarded a place in the Paradise and those who will turn out to be guilty and undeserving of Divine chastisement will be consigned to Hell.

After this, there will commence the last stage. The dwellers of the Paradise will live in a state of eternal bliss, supremely immune from every kind of pain, anxiety or suffering and exulting in the bounties of their Lord the like of which they would not have dreamt of in the world, while those that will be condemned to Hell will have to live permanently in a condition of unmitigated misery and distress. There will be for them nothing but horrible agony and castigation. This will be the ultimate stage after death.

The above was the sum and substance of what the prophets, specialy the last of them, Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam), have taught mankind about the Hereafter and what is indicated about it in the Holy Quraan and the Traditions. We will now examine some of the relevant verses of the Holy Quraan:

Every soul shall have a taste of death : in the end to Us shall ye be brought back.

(XXIX:57)



Every soul shall have a taste of death: and only on the Day of judgement shall you be paid your full recompense.

(III: 185)

كل نفس ذائقة الموت وإنما توفون أجوركم يوم القيامة (آل عمران ١٨٥)

The Last Day will be a frightful, horrible day.

O mankind ! fear your Lord, for the convulsion of the Hour (of judgement) will be a thing terrible ! the Day ye shall see it : every mother giving suck shall forget her sucklingbabe, and every pregnant female shall drop her load unformed ! thou shall see mankind as in a drunkenriot, yet not drunk ! but dreadful shall be the wrath of Allah

(XXII: 1-2)

يا أيها الناس اتقوا ربكم إن زلزلة الساعة شيء عظيم ۝ يوم ترونها تذهل كل مرضعة عما أرضعت وتضع كل ذات حمل حملها وترى الناس سكارى وما هم بسكارى ولكن عذاب الله شديد ۝ (الحج ١)

One day the earth and the mountains will be in violent commotion and the mountains will be as a heap of sand poured out and flowing down.

(LXXIII: 14)

يوم ترجف الأرض والجبال وكانت الجبال كثيبا مهيلا ۝ (المزمل ١)

A day that will make children hoary - headed.

(LXXIII: 17)

يوما يجعل الولدان شيبا ۝

At length, when there comes the deafening noise, that Day shall a men flee form his own brother, and from his mother

فإذا جاءت الصاخة ۝ يوم يفر المرء من أخيه ۝

and his father, and from his wife and children. Each one of them, that Day, will have enough concern (of his own) to make him indifferent to others. Some faces that Day will be beaming, laughing, rejoicing. And other faces that Day will be dust-stained, blackness will cover them.

LXXX : 33:41)

وأمه وأبيه وصاحبته وبنيه لكل امرئ منهم يومئذ شأن يغنيه وجوه يومئذ مسفرة ضاحكة مستبشرة ووجوه يومئذ عليها غبرة ترهقها قترة (العبس ٤٢)

On the Day of Recompense :

That Day shall ye be brought to Judgement ! not an act of yours that ye hide will be hidden.

(LXIX : 18)

يومئذ تعرضون لا تخفى منكم خافية (الحاقة)

One day We shall remove the mountains, and thou will see the earth as a level stretch, and We shall gather them, altogether, nor shall leave out any of them, And they will be marshalled before the Lord in ranks, with the announcement, "Now have ye come to Us (bare) as We created ye first ! Aye, ye thought We shall not fulfil the appointment made to you to meet Us?" And the Book (of Deeds) will be placed before you; and thou will see the sinful in great terror because of what is recorded therein; they

ويوم نسير الجبال وترى الأرض بارزة وحشرناهم فلم نغادر منهم أحدا وعرضوا على ربك صفا لقد جئتمونا كما خلقناكم أول مرة بل زعمتم ألن نجعل لكم موعدا ووضع الكتب فترى المجرمين مشفقين مما فيه ويقولون يويلتنا مال هذا الكتب لا يغادر صغيرة ولا كبيرة إلا

will say "Ah ! Woe to us ! What a Book is this ! It leaves nothing small or great, but takes account thereof!" They will find all that they did placed before them: and no one will thy Lord treat with injustice.
(XVIII : 47-49)

اَحْصَاهَا وَوَجَدُوا مَا عَمِلُوا حَاضِرًا وَلَا يَظْلِمُ رَبُّكَ اَحَدًا (الكهف ٤٩)

A man's own limbs will depose against him before Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) on the Day of Reckoning.

That day shall be set a seal on their mouths. But their hands will speak to Us, and their feet will bear witness to all that they did. *(XXXVI : 65)*



The Holy Quraan, in fine, has portrayed most graphically and vividly the happenings of the Last Day: the terrific explosions and the dreadful tremors, the total annihilation of the world even the mountains will be wiped out of existence, the rising again of men, the gathering together of them for the Judgement, the presentation of the Book of Deeds, the deposing of one's own limbs against oneself, the Judgement, and finally, the execution of the Divine Verdict and the allotment of Heaven and Hell. All these events have been described so candidly in some of the chapters of the Holy Quraan that one can obtain a full picture of the happenings of the Last Day by reading them. The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam), thus, is reported to have observed, "Anyone who wishes to know about the Last Day as if the scene of it was drawn before his eyes should read these chapters of the Holy Quraan: *Takveer, Infitaar and Inshiqaaq.*

We will now see a few Traditions of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) appertaining to Barzakh and the Last Day. Says he:

"When anyone of you dies the place that is going to be his abode

in the Heaven or in the Hell (on the basis of his conduct in the world) is brought before his eyes every morning and evening and it is said to him, "Behold, this is your destination, and, surely, you will reach it'."

"When the Trumpet will first be sounded on the Last Day by the command of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) everyone will faint and drop dead on the ground. When it will be sounded next all men will rise again."

They will then be commanded to proceed to make their presence before the Lord. The angels, thereafter, will be told to collect them together and here the investigation into their conduct on the earth will begin."

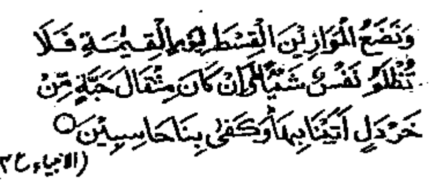
It is related that a Companion once enquired from the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam), "O Messenger of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), how will Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) raise up his creatures from the dead? Is there anything like it here in this world which may be cited as example?" The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) replied, "Has it never occured to you that you may have passed by a stretch of land in your country and found it dry and bereft of all vegetation, and, then, on coming upon it again, after sometime, discovered that it was covered lavishly with fresh, green grass?" The Companion replied, "Yes, my master. It has." The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) remarked, "This typifies resurrection. Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) will raise from the dead in the same manner."

The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) is reported to have asked, after reciting the Quraanic verse, *On the Day (the earth) will declare her tidings*[1], "Do you know what it means?" The Companions are said to have replied, "Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and His Apostle (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) know best." The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam), the Tradition goes on to tell, then said, "On the Day of Judgement the earth will bear witness to all the deeds performed by men on it (i.e., at the bidding of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) the earth will tell that such and such a person had done such and such a thing on it on such and such a day.)"

1. The Holy Quraan, XCIX : 4

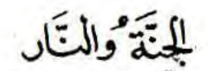
Speaking of the Day of Recompense the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam), further, is reported to have said, "On that Day Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) will call upon everyone to come forward and be his own witness. He will say to him, "Today you are your own witness: our recording angels are present; this much of evidence is enough." Then by the command of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) the lips of the person will be sealed and he will not be able to utter a word. His limbs (arms, legs, etc.) will then be commanded to speak and they will relate the whole story of his doings in the world."

It is reported that once a person went to the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) and said, "O Messenger of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! I have some slaves who sometimes disobey me, or they steal or tell me a lie. I sometimes scold them and, sometimes, I also punish them. How is it going to turn out for me on the Day of Requital?" The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) observed, "Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) will dispense justice correctly on the Day of Judgement. If the punishment you meted out to them is proportionate to their faults you will neither get nor have to give anything; you will be quit. If the punishment turns out to be of a lesser degree than what they merited, you will be recompensed for it. If the punishment proves to be excessive you will have to recompense the slaves." On hearing the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam)'s reply the enquirer began to cry. He said, "Then, O Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! the best thing for me is to send them away. I declare before you that I have set them free." The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) is also reported to have recited the following verse of the Holy Quraan to him :



We shall set up scales of justice for the Day of Judgement, so that not a soul will be dealt with unjustly in the least. And if there be (no more than) the weight of a mustard seed, We will bring it (to account) and enough are We to take account.

(XXI : 47)



Lesson 16

Heaven And Hell

In the Preceding chapter it has been said that the last Day will be the Day of Judgement. On that Day the believers who will also have done good deeds in the world and on whom there will be no punishment will rejoice. During the entire proceedings of the Day they will rest secure under the shadow of Divine benevolence and gain immediate admission into the Paradise. Such of them as well be adjudged worthy of deliverance but only after they have undergone a spell of punishment will be forgiven and admitted into the Paradise after they have suffered some of the agonies of the Day of Reckoning, or, at the utmost, after they have spent some time in Hell. In any case, those possessing the least amount of faith will, sooner or later, find their place in Heaven. Only men who will have departed from the world in a state of infidelity or polytheism will be doomed to live permanently in Hell. In sum, Heaven is the reward for faith, fidelity and good-doing and Hell for infidelity, polytheism and revolt against Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and transgression against His will.

The superlative. incomparable blissfulness of Heaven and the fearful, loathsome punishment and torture of Hell have been described in proper detail in the Holy Quraan:

For righteous are Gardens in nearness to their Lord, with rivers flowing beneath; therein is their eternal home; with Companions pure (and holy); and the good pleasure of Allah. For in Allah's sight are (all) His servants.

(III:15)



Verily the Companions of Garden shall that Day have joy in all that they do; they and their associates will be in grove of (cool) shade; reclining on Thrones (of dignity): every fruit (enjoyment) will be there for them; they shall have whatever they call for: "Peace!" —a word (of salutation) from a Lord Most Merciful.

(XXXVI : 55-58)

إِنَّ أَصْحَابَ الْجَنَّةِ الْيَوْمَ فِي شُغُلٍ فَاكِهُونَ ۝ هُمْ وَأَزْوَاجُهُمْ فِي ظِلَالٍ عَلَى الْأَرَائِكِ مُتَّكِئُونَ ۝ لَهُمْ فِيهَا فَاكِهَةٌ وَلَهُمْ مَا يَدَّعُونَ ۝ سَلَامٌ قَوْلًا مِنْ رَبٍّ رَحِيمٍ ۝ ([illegible])

There will be their all the souls could desire, all that the eyes could delight in; and ye shall abide therein forever.

(XLIII : 71)

وَفِيهَا مَا تَشْتَهِيهِ الْأَنْفُسُ وَتَلَذُّ الْأَعْيُنُ وَأَنْتُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ۝ ([illegible])

(Here is) a Parable of the Garden which the righteous are promised: in it are rivers of water incorruptible; rivers of milk of which the taste never changes, rivers of wine of joy to those who drink; and rivers of honey (pure and clear). In it there are for them all kinds of fruits; and Grace from their Lord. *(XLVII : 15)*

مَثَلُ الْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي وُعِدَ الْمُتَّقُونَ فِيهَا أَنْهَارٌ مِنْ مَاءٍ غَيْرِ آسِنٍ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِنْ لَبَنٍ لَمْ يَتَغَيَّرْ طَعْمُهُ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِنْ خَمْرٍ لَذَّةٍ لِلشَّارِبِينَ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِنْ عَسَلٍ مُصَفًّى وَلَهُمْ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ ([illegible])

No sense of fatigue shall touch them.

(XV : 48)

لَا يَمَسُّهُمْ فِيهَا نَصَبٌ ([illegible])

In short, Heaven is the abode of supreme and eternal blissfulness, felicity and happiness. There will not be the faintest trace of pain, sorrow or distress in it. Let us now see how will life in Hell be like:

But those whose balance is light will be those who have lost their souls; in Hell they will abide. The fire will burn their faces and they will therein grin with their lips displaced.

(XXIII : 103-104)

وَمَنْ خَفَّتْ مَوَازِينُهُ فَأُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ خَسِرُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ فِي جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدُونَ ۝ تَلْفَحُ وُجُوهَهُمُ النَّارُ وَهُمْ فِيهَا كَالِحُونَ

For the wrong-doers We have prepared a Fire whose (smoke and flames), like the walls and roof of a tent will hem them in: if they implore relief they will be granted water like melted brass, that will scald their faces.

(XVIII : 29)

إِنَّا أَعْتَدْنَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ نَارًا أَحَاطَ بِهِمْ سُرَادِقُهَا وَإِن يَسْتَغِيثُوا يُغَاثُوا بِمَاءٍ كَالْمُهْلِ يَشْوِي الْوُجُوهَ

But those who deny (their Lord), for them will be cut out a garment of Fire; over their heads will be poured out boiling water. With it will be scalded what is within their bodies, as well as (their skins). In addition, there will be maces of iron (to punish) them. Every time they wish to get away therefore from anguish, they will be forced back therein, and (it will be said), "Taste ye the Penalty of Burning!"

(XXII : 19-22)

فَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا قُطِّعَتْ لَهُمْ ثِيَابٌ مِّن نَّارٍ يُصَبُّ مِن فَوْقِ رُءُوسِهِمُ الْحَمِيمُ ۝ يُصْهَرُ بِهِ مَا فِي بُطُونِهِمْ وَالْجُلُودُ ۝ وَلَهُم مَّقَامِعُ مِنْ حَدِيدٍ ۝ كُلَّمَا أَرَادُوا أَن يَخْرُجُوا مِنْهَا مِنْ غَمٍّ أُعِيدُوا فِيهَا وَذُوقُوا عَذَابَ الْحَرِيقِ

Verily the tree of Zaqqum will be the food of the sinful, like molten brass; it will boil in their insides, like the boiling of scalding water. (A voice will cry :) "Seize ye him and drug him into the midst of the Blazing Fire! Then pour over his head the Penalty of Boiling Water."

(XLIV : 43-48)

إِنَّ شَجَرَتَ الزَّقُّومِ طَعَامُ الْأَثِيمِ كَالْمُهْلِ يَغْلِي فِي الْبُطُونِ كَغَلْيِ الْحَمِيمِ خُذُوهُ فَاعْتِلُوهُ إِلَىٰ سَوَاءِ الْجَحِيمِ ثُمَّ صُبُّوا فَوْقَ رَأْسِهِ مِنْ عَذَابِ الْحَمِيمِ (الدخان)

And he is given for drink ; boiling fetid water. In gulps will he sip it, but never will be near swallowing it down his throat; death will come to him from every quarter, yet will he not die; and in front of him will be a chastisement unrelenting.

(XIV : 16-17)

وَيُسْقَىٰ مِن مَّاءٍ صَدِيدٍ يَتَجَرَّعُهُ وَلَا يَكَادُ يُسِيغُهُ وَيَأْتِيهِ الْمَوْتُ مِن كُلِّ مَكَانٍ وَمَا هُوَ بِمَيِّتٍ وَمِن وَرَائِهِ عَذَابٌ غَلِيظٌ (سورة ابراهيم)

Those who reject Our Signs We shall soon cast into the Fire: as often as their skins are roasted through, We shall change them for fresh skins that they may taste the Penalty.

(IV : 56)

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِنَا سَوْفَ نُصْلِيهِمْ نَارًا كُلَّمَا نَضِجَتْ جُلُودُهُم بَدَّلْنَاهُمْ جُلُودًا غَيْرَهَا لِيَذُوقُوا الْعَذَابَ (سورة النساء)

But enough. There are hundreds fo verses in the Holy Quraan that tell the same story. To take now some of the Traditions of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) :

"Says Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), 'For My faithful servants I have got ready (in Heaven) things no eye has seen, nor car heard of, nor the thought of which has ever crossed a human heart'."

The delicious foods, the luscious fruit, the delightful drinks, the gorgeous clothes, the magnificent palaces, the splendid gardens, the delectable lakes, the wonderful hoors (celestial brides) and other innumerable things of divine beauty and joy that will be available in Heaven are, to be sure, known only to Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa). We, on our part, believe in them implicitly and hold them to be absolutely true.

Says another Tradition: "As the dwellers will enter Heaven a heavenly herald will proclaim, 'Stay healthy; disease in not going to touch you here. Live forever; death does exist for you no more. Remain young; you shall not grow old in Heaven. Be happy always; for you, now, there is neither pain nor sorrow,"

But the greatest boon that will be conferred on the faithful, who also practise righteousness, after they have entered their celestial abode, is that they will see Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) in all His Divine Splendour. In the words of the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) it will be like this:

"When the dwellers of Paradise have entered the home of celestial bliss Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) will enquire from them thus: 'Do you want that I may bestow a favour upon you over and above the blessings you enjoy ?' The people of the Heaven will answer: ' Our Lord ! thou hast illumined our faces, saved us from Hell and granted us the Paradise. (what more can we want ?)' The veil will then be lifted and they shall see their Lord unhindered. All the endless joys and blessings of the Paradise will fade away before the glorious spectacle of the Almighty."

In another Tradition it is related that once the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) while describing the marvellous pleasures of the Paradise and the extreme agony of the Hell observed:

"On the Day of judgement a person will be brought who will have

lived in greatest pomp and luxury in the world but will be condemned to Hell because of his evil deeds. He will be diped once into the fire of Hell and then taken out of it immediately and asked, "Have you ever known comfort ? The man will reply, No, our Lord. I swear by Thy name, I have never known what comfort is. Afterwards, another person will be brought who will have led a life of rank misery and misfortune on the earth but will be found worthy of Paradise owing to his faithfulness to Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and piety. He will be taken to Heaven and then led out of it immediately and asked, 'Have you ever known pain or misery ? 'No, our Lord!' he will reply, 'I swear by Thy name, I have never known what pain or misery is!"

In truth, Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) has provided such wonderful joys and comforts in the paradise that a man who has passed his days in the world in utmost distress will forget all about it as soon as he has had a taste of them. Likewise, the Hell is such an infernal place that a person who have lived all one's life in the world in rare luxury and happiness will at once fell, on stepping into it, that he had never known what was to be happy or comfortable.

The severity and dreadfulness of the chastisement of the Hell can be imagined from this one Tradition of the sacred Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam):

"The mildest punishment that will be inflicted on a person in the Hell is that he will be made to wear a pair of sandals made of fire which will be so hot as to set his brain boiling as if something was cooking in a pot on a stove."

The fare that will be served there has been indicated in the verses of the Holy Quraan we have quoted already. Here, also, are two Traditions of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam):

"The stinking pus people will be made to drink in Hell is such that if a bucket of it was thrown into the world, the whole world would be filled with its infernal stench."

"If a drop of *Zaqqum*[1] were to fall on the earth it would be enough to pollute all the articles of food and drink that are found here."

Brohters! All these events the Holy Quraan and the sacred Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) have told about to come after death—the Barzakh, the Resurrection, the Judgement and Heaven and Hell—, and we have discussed in this lesson and the preceding one, are literally correct and true. There can be no doubt in them at all. By the Almighty, they will come to pass exactly as the Holy Quraan and the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) have taught. We will see them ourselves, with our own eyes, after death.

The Last Day and Heaven and Hell have been dwelt upon in the Holy Quraan and the Traditions with such emphasis and thoroughness and referred to again and again a thousand times for no other reason except to arouse in us a living, genuine anxiety to do all that lies in our power to save ourselves from the fearful penalty of Hell and attain the cherished, supremely delightful goal of Paradise.

Brothers! Life is transitory, One day we must die. Death is certain, and so is the Last Day. We will, surely, have to stand before Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) after death and answer for our deeds on the earth. What, then, is our eternal home going to be– Heaven or Hell?

There is time still for us to mend our ways, to offer honest repentance for our misdeeds of the past and make a real, sincere effort for the attainment of Paradise.

Should, Allah-forbid, the rest of our days in the world be also spent in neglect and folly, then, be sure, there is nothing in store for us in the Hereafter save regret and the punishment of Hell.

1. The infernal tree, mentioned in the Holy Quraan, the fruit of which those doomed to the eternal punishment of Hell shall eat.-Translator

Lesson 17

الذكر

Zikr

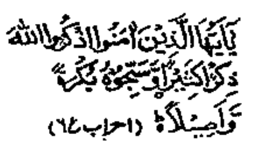
Islam stands for self-surrender and submission to Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa). It calls on men to fashion their lives according to the Divine Will. It wants them to be loyal to Him in all circumstances and in every sphere of their conduct, personal as well as social. This can be possible only when our mind's eye is fixed permanently on the Almighty, and the consciousness of His love and Glory overshadows all our thoughts and actions.

It is, as such, one of the special teaching of Islam that we remember Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) much and often and keep our tongues fresh with the recital of His names, praises and attributes. It is an excellent and well-tried method for producing in our hearts His love and the consciousness of His Greatness. It is natural for a man's heart to be filled with the love of anyone on whose splendour and excellence his mind dwells all the time.

In any way, it is a fact that frequent remembrance kindles the flame of love and lends strength to it and so also that the life of complete loyalty and submission to Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) which is the essence of Islam can be possible only through Divine love. It is love alone that makes one the willing bondsman of anothers. As a Persian verse says:-

What is Love?
Say : "To be the beloved's bondsman."

Consequently, great stress has been laid in the Holy Quraan and by the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) on Zikr (Remembrance of Allah Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa).
The Holy Quraan reads :



O ye who believe ! celebrate, the Praises of Allah, and do this often; and glorify Him morning and evening.

(XXXIII : 41-42)

وَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا لَّعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

And celebrate the Praises of Allah much and often : that ye may prosper :

(LXII : 10)

There are two things which lead one to forget Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) when one gets absorbed in them. These are wealth and family. So the Holy Quraan names them specifically and warns Muslims against becoming a prisoner to them.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تُلْهِكُمْ أَمْوَالُكُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُكُمْ عَن ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَمَن يَفْعَلْ ذَٰلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ

O ye who believe ! let not your riches or your children divert you from the remembrance of Allah. Those who act upon this, Those are the people in loss.

(LXIII -9)

The five daily prayers (Salaah) are obligatory for Muslims. These prayers, certainly, are a means of remembering Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and a very good one too. But it would not be proper for a Muslim to stop at them considering that if he had offered the Salaah he had done all that was required of him by way of remembrance of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and there was no need to do anything further[1]. It is a clear commandment of Islam that, in addition to Salaah, one should also not neglect Zikr in whatever state one may be. It is said in Surah Nisaa.

1. It does not mean that just as it is compulsory for a muslim to offer Salaah five times a day in the same way it is also essential for him to keep him self engaged always in the remembrance of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa). What is required is that that a Muslim should not be neglectful of the duty of remembering Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa).

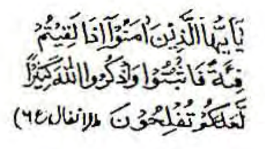
When ye pass (congragational) prayers, celebrate Allah's Praises, standing, sitting down or lying down.

(IV : 103)

فَإِذَا قَضَيْتُمُ الصَّلٰوةَ فَاذْكُرُوا اللّٰهَ قِيَامًا وَّقُعُوْدًا وَّعَلٰى جُنُوْبِكُمْ ۚ
(النساء ع ١٥)

Thus, even those engaged in Jihad are enjoined to carry out the Zikr of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) keenly and enthusiastically. Says Surah Anfaal.

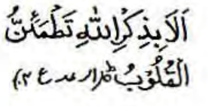
O ye who belive ! when ye meet a force, be firm and call Allah in rememebrance much (and often); that ye may prosper.
(VIII:45)



This verse, as the verse quoted earlier, "And celebrate the Praises of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) much and often: that ye may prosper", show that Zikr, by no means, constitutes an important factor in the success and felicity of the believers. As against it, the verse we mentioned a few lines ago candidly declares that those who neglect the Zikr do a very worng thing. They are at a great loss. In *Surah Ra'ad,* further, it is stated as a characteristic of Zikr that it imparts peace and tranquility to the mind and the soul.

For without a doubt, in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find satisfaction.

(XILL : 28)



It is related that once the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) was asked who would be the most exalted among the servants of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) on the Last Day. The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) replied; "Those who do the Zikr of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) be they men or women."

Hadhrat Abu Moosa relates from the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) that "Those who remember Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and those who do not are like those who are alive and those who are dead (i.e. those who remember Allah Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa and celebrate His praises are alive while those who don't, are dead)."

Relates Hadhrat Abdullah bin Omar that the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) once said, "There is a polish for everything; for the hearts it is the Zikr of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa). Nothing is more effective then Zikr for deliverance from Divine chastisement."

It should be understood clearly that the real meaning of Zikr is that a man should never be without the thought of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa). In whatever circumstances he may be placed, with whatever thing he may be occupied, he must not allow himself to become unmindful of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), His laws and ordinances. Though for this it is not necessary that the tongue should also always be repeating His names, attributes etc., such a state of permanent and all-pervading Allah – consciousness is commonly found only in devout servants of the Lord who succeed in producing within themselves an everlasting awareness of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and a feeling of infinite devotion to Him through frequent Zikr. There is developing a tendency among some of the modern educated people to hold the Zikr as futile. This is a grave folly. Zikr is a most valueable instrument for forging a living and all-embracing link with Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa). The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) was very clear about its worth and importance.

It is related by Hadhrat Abdullah bin Busr that once a man presented himself before the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) and said, "O Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! There are numerous teachings of Islam. Please tell me something which I may hold fast forever". The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) replied, "Keep your tongue wet always with the Zikr of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)."

Another Tradition related by Hadhrat Abu Hurairah reads; "Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) says, 'When anyone remembers Me and his lips move in My Zikr, I am by his side'."

Some Zikr of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam)

The value and importance of Zikr would have become apparent from the Quraanic verses and Traditions we have just quoted. We have seen how Zikr of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) promotes and strengthens Divine love in our hearts. Below we give some of the favourite Zikr of the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam).

Foremost

Relates Hadhrat Jabir from the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) that :

"The best of all Zikrs is the Zikr of لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ

Narrates Hadhrat Abu Hurairah that the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) once remarked: "When anyone recites لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ from the depth of his heart the gates of the heavens open for the Kalimah till it reaches the seventh heaven provided, of course, that the devotee abstains from the major sins."

According to anotcher Tradition the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) is reported to have said, "Once Moses (Alaihis Salaam) begged the Lord to tell him something through which he could do His Zikr. The Lord told him to do so through the *Kalimah* of لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ upon which Moses (Alaihis Salaam) said. "This is what every one does. I want something special." Came the reply, "If the seven heavens and all the heavenly creatures and the seven climes on the earth and all that is contained in them are placed on one side of the balance and the *Kalimah* of لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ on the other, the later shall turn out to be heavier."

Such, indeed, is the splendour of لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ . People, unfortunately, take it to be a mere phrase. The writer of these lines, himself has heard it from an inspired devotee of the Lord in a moment of rare spiritual feeling that, "If someone with the entire wealth of the

world at his command were to tell me to give him one *Kalimah* of لَا اِلٰہَ اِلَّا اللّٰہُ recited by me in return for his treasures, this humble self shall refuse to do so."

The Third Kalimah

Related Hadhrat Samurah bin Jundub that the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) once said that of all the spoken words and the Kalimah the most excellent were these four:

سُبْحَانَ اللّٰہِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلّٰہِ وَلَآ اِلٰہَ اِلَّا اللّٰہُ وَاللّٰہُ اَکْبَرُ

Narrates Hadhrat Abu Hurairah that the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) said, "The Kalimah سُبْحَانَ اللّٰہِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلّٰہِ وَلَآ اِلٰہَ اِلَّا اللّٰہُ وَاللّٰہُ اَکْبَرُ is dearer to me than the entire world on which the sun shines."

This Kalimah is most complete and comprehensive and all the aspects of Divine praise are covered by it. In some Tradition the phrase لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّۃَ اِلَّا بِاللّٰہِ is also included it. It occurs after اَللّٰہُ اَکْبَرُ A revered spiritul mentor used to explain the importance of the Kalimah to the writer of these lines in following manner:

سُبْحَانَ اللّٰہِ Glory be to Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), free from all faults and blemishes and other things that are not worthy of His Glory. اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰہِ . Praise be to Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), He is the embodiment of perfection and the centre of every kind of virtue, (therefore) all praise is for Him, and when such is His Glory that He is absolutely blemishless and all the wonderful virtues are assembled in Him. He alone is our Lord and the sole object of our heart's desire. لَآ اِلٰہَ اِلَّا اللّٰہُ . "There is no God save Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), We are His own helpless slaves and of no one else. اَللّٰہُ اَکْبَرُ Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) is Great, He is Most powerful, Almighty. We can never acquit ourselves of our duties to Him as His slaves nor can we ever gain nearness unto Him except that He Himself blesses us with His Grace. لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّۃَ اِلَّا بِاللّٰہِ

" There is no power or virtue but in Allah."

Tasbeehaat-i-Fatimah

A well-known Tradition of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) has it that the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam)'s beloved daughter (and Hadhrat Ali's wife), Hadhrat Fatimah, used to perform all the domestic duties with her own hands. She had even to draw water from the well and to carry it home and to grind the corn in the millstone. One day she begged the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) to provide her with a domestic servant upon which the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) observed, "I will tell you of something that will serve you better than a domestic servant. Recite سُبْحَانَ اللهِ 33 times. اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ 33 times and اَللّٰهُ اَكْبَرُ 34 times after each Salaah and on retiring to bed. This will be of greater value to you than a servant."

Another Tradition says, "whoever will recite after each Salaah سُبْحَانَ اللهِ 33 times, اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ 33 times and اَللّٰهُ اَكْبَرُ 34 times and, at the end of it, the Kalimah, all his sins will be forgiven even if they be as profuse as the foam of the sea."

لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ وَحْدَهٗ لَا شَرِيْكَ لَهٗ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ وَهُوَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ

(There is no god but Allah Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa. He is alone. No partner hath He. Unto Him belongs sovereignty and unto Him belongs Praise and He is all-Powerful).

SubhaanAllah wa Behamdehi

It is related by Hadhrat Abu Hurairah. that the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) said, "He who will recite a hundred times سُبْحَانَ اللهِ وَبِحَمْدِهٖ in morning and evening regularly no one shall take with him a greater provision of virtue to the Hereafter than him save the person who recited it even more."

Another Tradition related again by Hadhrat Abu Hurairah says: "Two phrases are very light on the tongue but are very heavy in the Balance of Deeds and Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) loves them very much. These are سُبْحَانَ اللهِ وَبِحَمْدِهٖ and سُبْحَانَ اللهِ الْعَظِيْمِ

There are many other phrases of Zikr commended by the Prophet

(Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam). But the few we have given here, are quite sufficient for anyone to adopt for regular recitation.

As regards the rewards and recompense in the Hereafter promised in the Traditions, it needs to be noted that there is no fixed measure or a standard yard-stick for it. Whoever will recite a *Kalimah* of Zikr sincerely and with no other objective then the propitiation of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) will, Inshaa Allah, merit the full reward no matter how many times and at what hour he does so. But when a spiritual guide prescribes a Zikr for anyone for a particular purpose like the kindling of Divine love or awakening of the heart and the creation of a permanent consciousness of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) or for the eradication of a moral or spiritual ailment, it is necessary to follow the routine he lays down and to do the Zikr as many times as he tells. Without this the desired results can't be obtained by the devotee. For example if a person recites the Surah Faatihah or any other Surah of the Holy Quraan as an act of religious merit there is no harm if he does so once in the morning, once at noon, once in the afternoon, once in the evening and a couples of times in the night, but if he wants to learn the Surah by heart, also, he will have to recite it scores of times during one sitting. Otherwise he will not be able to memorise it. This is exactly the difference between an ordinary Zikr which spiritual-mentors prescribe to disciples for the cure of a spiritual morbidity or as a means for the attainment of any other objective of a similar category.

Many people get caught in confusion because of not knowing this difference. This is why these few lines have been added above.

The reading of the Holy Quraan

The reading of the Holy Quraan is also a very good Zikr. A Tradition says.

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1. Some people these days believe that merely reading of the Holy Quraan, without following its meaning, is useless. They, perhaps, imagine the Holy Quraan to be like any other book and just as it is useless to read a book unless one also understands what it says.

continue....... next page

"The superiority of the word of Holy Quraan over any other word is the same as the superiority of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) over any of His creature."

Hadhrat Abdullah bin Mas'ood relates from the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) that: "He who reads one letter of the Holy Quraan for him there is one virtue and the reward on this virtue is equal to that on ten other virtues. When I say الم I do not mean that Alif, Laam, Meem is one letter, but Alif (الف) is one letter Laam (ل) is another letter, and Meem (م) the third."

Yet another Tradition as related by Hadhrat Abu Umaamah, reads:

"O people, read the Holy Quraan. On the Day of judgement the Holy Quraan will intercced for those who will have been reading it (in their lives)."

Some suggestions

1. There is no need for those in whose hearts Zikr of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) has come to dwell permanently as a result of

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in the same way they feel that the reading of the Holy Quraan also without following its translation is meaningless. But the truth is that the Holy Quraan is just not like any other book. It is the book of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and nothing besides it. The mere reading of it, with due reverence and humility, is not without its significance. It indicates devotion to Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), and, thus, it becomes an act of worship. Had the purpose of reading the Holy Quraan been only to realise its import and to appreciate intelligently what it seeks to convey, it would not have been nessessary to recite the surah Faatihah as many as four times is in the course of a single Salaah. Only once would have been enough for knowing its meaning. Such a misunderstanding arises, generally, among those who imagine Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) to be something of a worldly sovereign. They have no idea of His supreme Belovedness and His Worshipfulness. They have known Him and accepted Him only with their minds. Their hearts do not fully participate in it. Together with this, it should also be remembered that the real purpose of the Holy Quraan i.e. guidance and instruction can be realised only when it is properly understood, when it is read carefully and the meaning of its verses are studied diligently. This is the best way of reading it and a source of greater augustness. At the same time, the mere reading of the Holy Quraan also, is not futile. The correct and balanced view in this matter is what we have stated here.

constant endeavour and become a part of their existence to follow a set routine or to make a special effort in this respect. But if common people like us want to strengthen their bond with Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and to partake of its auspiciousness and blessedness they must practise the Zikr at a fixed time and in a fixed number according to their individual circumstances. Better still, they should seek the advice of a spiritual guide while choosing a Zikr phrase for themselves. Or they can select a Kalimah from the Kalimahs we have given above which may be most suited to their temperament. "Time should also be set aside daily for the reading of the Holy Quraan.

2. As far as possible the meaning of the Kalimah used for Zikr should be kept in mind during the recitation. The Zikr should be done with an active awareness of Divine Glory and Magnificence and with the feeling and the belief that Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) is near, right here, listening to every word that is being recited.

3. Wudhu (ablution) is not necessary for Zikr. It can be done freely without the Wudhu. The reward will not suffer because of it. But the spiritual effectiveness of the Zikr is very much enhanced when it is done with Wudhu.

4. It has been seen earlier that the third Kalimah

سُبْحَانَ اللهِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ وَلَآ إِلٰهَ إِلَّا اللهُ وَاللهُ أَكْبَرُ

is the most comprehensive one among all the Kalimahs. If it is adopted for recitation, it can fulfil all the needs. This writer has seen that spiritual mentors generally prescribe it to their disciples with *Durood Shareef and Istighfaar*[1].

1. Dealt with separately in lessons 19and 20

Lesson 18

الدعاء

Du'aa

When it is definite and beyond dispute that whatever happens in the world happens by the Will of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and that every thing that exists lies absolutely in His power and conrol, it is manifestly natural for us to supplicate to Him in our needs, big as well as small. Followers of all religions beseech their god and address their petitions to Him. But in Islam it is a matter of paramount importance. States the Holy Quraan:

And your Lord says: "Call on Me: I will answer (your Prayer)."

(XL: 60)

وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمُ ادْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ (المومن ٦٢)

Say (to the rejectors): my Lord is not uneasy because of you if you call not on Him.

(XXV:77)

قُلْ مَا يَعْبَؤُا بِكُمْ رَبِّي لَوْلَا دُعَاؤُكُمْ (الفرقان ٦٤)

Together with calling on us to supplicate to Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) in our needs the Holy Quraan also goes on to assure that Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) is very close to His servants. He hears their petitions and grants them.

When my servants ask thee concerning Me, I am indeed close to them. I listen to the prayer of every supplicant when he calleth on Me.

(II: 186)

وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ (البقرة ٢٣)

The Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) also assures that to beg to Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) for our needs, to turn to Him and to make our petitons to Him is the very essence and marrow of worship. Says he:

"Du'aa (making of earnest entreaties to Allah Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa is worship." (According to another version, the Tradition reads: "Du'a is the essence and marrow of worship)"

"Nothing enjoys a loftier place in the sight of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) than du'aa."

Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) is displeased with those who do not beg for their needs to Him. The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) is reported to have said, "Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) is displeased with His servant who does not supplicate for his needs to Him."

Glory be to Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! If a person approaches a close friend or a near relative with his needs every now and then they get sick of him, but Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) is so marvelously gracious and benevolent to His servants that He gets angry if they do not turn to Him in their needs. A Tradition says:

"For whom the doors of Du'aa have opened, for him the doors of mercy have opened."

Anyway, to pray to Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) for one's needs for the realisaton of one's ambitions is not only a means to their fulfilment but also a superb act of worship and Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) is very happy with him who does so. He opens the gates of His mercy for him. This is true of all supplications whether they be of religious or spiritual nature or a worldly need. The only condition is that the object or need should be of a lawful and legitimate kind. To pray for an improper or sinful thing is also improper and sinful.

The greater the depth of feeling, the stronger the realisation of one's own helplessness and the firmer the conviction of Divine Omnipotence and Benevolence with which a prayer is made, the greater the chances are of its acceptance. A prayer wich does not spring from the heart but is uttered only by the mouth as a formality is not prayer. The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) says:

"Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) does not grant a prayer that is made with a sleeping heart."

Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) listens to prayers at all hours but we learn from Traditions that there are certain occasions on which if a prayer is made it stands greater chances of acceptance. As for instance, after a Fardh (obligatory) Salaah, during the later part of the night, at the time of breaking a fast or at any other moment of a similar nature when a good act is performed, and during the course of a journey particularly when it is undertaken for a religious purpose and for the sake of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa).

It is not necessary for a man to be a saint, or innocent of sin, for his prayers to be granted. It is true that the prayers of noble and virtuous persons are granted more than those of others but it does not mean that the prayers of ordinary men and sinners are not heard at all. One, therefore, must not give up making supplications to Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) thinking what would the supplications of a sinner do. Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), the Beneficient, the Merciful listens to the prayers of His sinning servants, too, just as He feeds them and clothes them inspite of their misdeeds. Everyone should, therefore, pray. We have seen how Du'aa is regular worship. Divine recompense will in any case be his who will engage himself in it.

It will be foolish to loose heart and cease praying if the object for which an earnest prayer is made to Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) is not realised. Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), in any event, is not bound by our desires. Sometimes in His judgement, it is in our own interest that our prayers should not be granted at once. Sometimes delay is found by Him to be better for us. But, we, in our ignorance, get

disheartened. We are inclined to be hasty and when our prayers are not answered we give up praying as futile. As a Tradition of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) assures us:

"Du'aa is never wasted. But the forms of its acceptance vary. Sometimes a person gets what he begs for. Sometimes Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) does not think it best for him that the thing he prays for should be granted. So He does not give it to him but, in its place, a greater favour is bestowed on him or an impending calamity is averted or the prayer is made an atonement for his sins. (Since the supplicant does not know it he imagines that his entreaties and supplications have come to nothing). Sometimes the prayer is turned into the harvest of the Hereafter. The object for which a person prays is not granted to him in his life but greater rewards is reserved for him in the life to come as a compensation thereof."

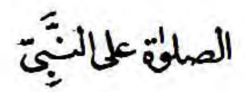
And here is another Tradition.

"Some people, many of whose prayers had not been granted in this world, when they will see in the Hereafter the glorious rewards and blessings that had been set aside for them as a recompense for their unfulfilled prayers, will exclaim mournfully how great would it have been, had none of their prayers been granted in the world so that they could get the compensation for them all in the Hereafter."

In fine, everyone who believes in Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) should make it a habit to call on Him for his needs with all his heart and with and unshakeable faith in the Omnipotence and the Benevolence of the Almighty and believing positively that the prayer will be granted. He must be sure in his heart that his prayer shall never, never go waste.

The endeavour should be to pray in words richly expressive of Divine Might and Magnificence and of one's own total helplessness. Many prayers are contained in the Holy Quraan and hundreds of them in the Traditions. These prayers, the prayers of the Holy Quraan and the Tradition, are by far the best. A selection of forty of these prayers is given at the end of the book.

Lesson 19



Durood Shareef

Durood Shareef is an invocation we make to Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) to bestow His choicest favours and blessings on the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam). It is a kind of prayer. The truth is that, after Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), the greatest obligation on us is that of the sacred Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam). He underwent tremendous hardship and endured the bitterest of persecutions in order to convey the divine guidance to us. Had he not borne these trials and sufferings the light of faith would never have reached us. We would be dwelling in the gloom of apostasy and making our home in Hell after death.

Since faith is the greatest blessing on the earth and we have attained it solely through the merciful agency of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam), our greatest benefactor, next to Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), is Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam). There is nothing we can do to pay back the enormous debt of gratitude we owe to him. We can only pray for him to Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) as a token of our loyalty and gratefulness.

But what prayer can we make that may be worthy of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam)? Naturally, none besides that Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) may magnify him and bless him with His choicest favours. This is just what Durood Shareef is.

The Holy Quraan clearly enjoins on us to offer the Durood, and in what a wonderful manner does it do so:

Allah and His Angels send blessings on the Prophet: O Ye that believe ! send ye blessings on him and salute him with all respect.

(XXXIII: 56)



In this verse we are first told that Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) Himself honours the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) and holds him in strongest affection and that His Angels also do the same. They pay reverence to him and beseech Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) to bless him with His most marvellous favours. The verse then goes on to command us also, i.e., the believers to send blessings on him and salute him with all respect. Thus, before the command is given care is taken to explain to us that the thing we are being required to do is something which is particularly pleasing to Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and which the angels also fondly do. After knowing it, what Muslim is there worth his name who will not make it a religious duty to offer the Durood?

Below we give a few Traditions of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) extolling the virtue and merit of Durood Shareef.

The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) is reported to have said:

"He who will send blessings on me once Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) will confer ten favours on him." (In another Tradition it has also been said that, "Allah Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa will forgive his ten sins and raise him higher in rank by ten degrees)."

"There are many angels of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) whose special duty is that they keep on moving in the world and whichever follower of mine sends blessings on me they carry it to me at once."

The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) says :

"Closest to me on the Day of Requital will be he who sends blessings on me oftener."

"That man is a big miser in whose presence my name is taken and he does not offer the Durood."

"May he be disgraced in whose presence my name is taken and he fails to offer the Durood".

In sum, to send blessings on the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) is a foremost duty we owe to him as well as it is a source of stupendous virtue and blessedness and the fountainhead of prodigious blessings in this world and the next.

Words of Durood

Once the Companions asked the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam), "How are we to offer Durood and salutation?"

The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) advised them about Durood-i-Ibrahimi which is recited in the Salaah. We have already written it in Lesson 2.

Very much similar to Durood-i-Ibrahimi, but a little shorter, is another Durood which was also taught by the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam). It reads :

O Allah! magnify Prophet Muhammad (Sallallaho Alaihe Wasallam), the Unlettered, his wives, the mothers of the faithful, his posterity (followers), and his family as Thou hast magnified the family of Ibrahim. Verily, Thou are the Praiseworthy, the Majestic.

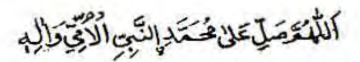


Whenever we say or call the name of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) or talk about him or hear about him from anyone, we should at once send blessings on him. On such occasions it is enough to say only صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ or عَلَيْهِ الصَّلٰوةُ وَالسَّلَامُ

Daily Routine

Some determined persons with a natural flair and fondness for Durood-i-Shareef make it a regular habit to recite it thousands of times daily. But if weak-willed men like ourselves can manage to recite it a hundred times in morning and evening with proper devotion and reverence they will profit so much by it and there will be such exquisite favours of the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) on him that it is not possible even to imagine them in this world.

The following Durood Shareef is suggested to those who may be wanting to know a brief one



O Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! Magnify Mohammed (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) the Unlettered Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) and his family.

Lesson 20

التوبة
Taubah

Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) sent down His Apostles into the world and revealed His Books through them so that men may learn to distinguish good from evil, virtue from vice, and earn for themselves Divine approbation and deliverence in the life to come by abstaining from the wicked and the unlawful and adopting what was good and virtuous. Thus those who reject the faith and refuse to believe in the Prophets (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) and the Divine guidence with which they had been raised up their whole existence. So to speak, is one of defiance and and transgresion. They are totally indifferent to the message sent down by Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa). They will have nothing to do with it. Unless they believe in the Messengers and Apostles raised up by Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and in the Holy Scriptures revealed by Him, and particularly in the Last of the prophets. Prophet Mohammed (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) and the Divine Book he brought, i.e., the Holy Quraan and accept his guidance they can never hope to attain the good pleasure of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and success and salvation in the Hereafter. The denial of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), His Apostles and His Books is not pardonable. It cannot be condoned. This fact has been made abundantly clear by every prophet of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) during his time. In any case it is essential for the salvation of the Apostates and Polytheists that they first of all renounce Apostasy and Polytheism and take to the path of Faith and Monotheism. Without it salvation is not possible.

Those who believe in the prophets and affirm their intention to live according to their teachings also sometimes fall into error. They are misled by the Devil or by their own baser instincts and impulses into committing a sin. For such defaulters Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)

has kept the door of Taubah (Repentance) open.

Taubah means that if a person slips into folly and be guilty of a sin or an act of transgression against the law of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) he should feel genuinely sorry and ashamed over it, and resolve sincerely not to do so again, and seek the forgiveness of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) with all his heart. It is stated in the Holy Quraan and the Traditions that by doing only this much a man's sin is forgiven and he succeeds in winning the pleasure of the Almighty.

It is essential to know that Taubah is not vocal penitence. It is not at all a matter of uttering so many words of repentance. The sorrow must be sincere, the shame must be felt in the heart and the resolution not to repeat the folly and be guilty of the sin again must be totally genuine.

It is like this, suppose in a fit of temper or in a moment of acute depression a person swallows poison with the intention of killing himself. But when the poison begins to work and a thousand knives begin to tear his intestines into pieces and he knows that death is near, he repents his folly and cries out in desperation for medical relief. Now, at that time, his first thought will be that if he survived he would never touch the poison again or think of committing suicide. This exactly should be the state of the man who repents after sin. His heart should be seized by the fear of Divine Chastisement, the resolution not to repeat the act again should be an honest resoultion and so also his entreaties to Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) for forgiveness.

If such a state of feelings is realised by a person in any degree he should be sure that the stain of sin has been washed way and the gates of mercy have opend for him. After such a Taubah the sinner is completely absolved of his sin, he is thoroughly sanctified and becomes even dearer in the sight of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) than he was before, so much so that sometimes a person succeeds in attaining, through Taubah, a place which would be hard to reach even after a hundred years of prayer and fasting.

All this that we have said on the subject of Taubah was derived entirely from the twin sources of the Holy Quraan and the Traditions. We are going now to consider some of the relevant verses of the Holy Quraan:

O ye who believe ! Turn to Allah with sincere repentance: in the hope that your Lord will remove from you your ills and admit you to Gardens beneath which rivers flow.

(LXVI : 8)

يا أيها الذين آمنوا توبوا إلى الله توبة نصوحا عسى ربكم أن يكفر عنكم سيئاتكم ويدخلكم جنت تجري من تحتها الأنهر (التحريم ع ٢)

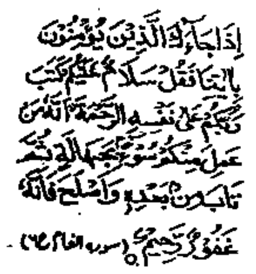
Why turn they not to Allah, and seek His forgiveness ? For Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

(V : 74)

أفلا يتوبون إلى الله ويستغفرونه والله غفور رحيم (المائدة ع ١٠)

When those come to thee who believe in Our Signs, say: "Peace be on you! your Lord hath inscribed for Himself (the rule of) Mercy: Verily, if any of you did evil in ignorance, and thereafrer repented, and amended (his conduct). Lo, He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful."

(VI : 54)



Also, look at the following Traditions :

"Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) says, 'O My Creatures ! you commit follies day and night and I can forgive them all. So, seek My forgivencess. I will forgive."

"Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) extends the arms of Mercy and Forgiveness every night so that the sinners of the day may repent and seek His pardon and every day so that the sinners of the night may repent and seek His pardon and it shall be like this with Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) till the sun rises from the West near the Doomsday."

"A man committed a sin and then he prayed to Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), O Lord! I have sinned. Forgive me.' Upon this, the Lord observed, 'My servant knows that there is a Lord, Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), who can punish him for his sin as well as forgive. I have forgiven the sin of My servant.' The person abstained from sin as long as the Lord wished after which he again went astray and fell into transgression. He ocne again prayed to Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), 'O Lord! I have sinned. Forgive me.' The Lord observed, 'My sinning servant knows that there is a Lord, Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), who can chastise him for sinning as well as forgive. I have forgiven the sin of My servant'. He remained free from sin as long as the Lord wished and then was again guilty of it. Once again he prayed to Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), 'O Lord! I have sinned. Forgive me'. The Lord observed, 'My servant knows for certain that there is a Lord, Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), who can punish as well as forgive him for his sin. I have forgiven the sin of My servant'."

"One who seeks Divine forgiveness after sin, becomes like one who has never been guilty of a sin."

These Traditions show how Merciful and Oft-Forgiving is the Lord. To get emboldened by them and to start indulging freely in sinful activities on the strength of Taubah is not worthy of a Muslim. Such verses and Traditions should, on the contrary, lend greater strength to the love of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa). They should make one feel that it really was the height of meanness to act against the wishes of such a Compassionate and Benevolent Lord. If a master be of a most kind and affectionate nature, would it become his servants to pay back his kindness and effection by violating his wishes and disobeying his commands?

What these verses and Traditions seek to convey is that should a person succumb to the temptations of the Devil or to his own ignoble desires and inclinations and commit a sin he must not despair of the mercy of the Lord and lose all hope of salvation. He should, on the other hand, turn his back immediately on the lapse and try earnestly to remove its stain through Taubah, by begging Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), in all sincerity, His forgiveness. The Almighty, in His Infinite Mercy, will forgive and instead of being angry with him, He will become even more pleased for regretting sincerly what he had done and turning to Him hopefully for remission. A Tradition states :

"When a man turns to Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) after sin and repents sincerely for his folly it makes Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) even happier than a rider whose mount may have thrown him down in a vast desert and fled away with all the journey's provisions laden on its back, and, when the rider may have resigned himself to his fate and sat down under a tree to wait for his death, the animal may return, all of a sudden, with the provisions intact and the rider may catch hold of it and blurt out (stupidly) in sheer joy, 'O Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), Thou, indeed, art my slave and me thy Master'." The Prophet Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) says, "The pleasure, this person feels after getting his mount back, Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) Almighty is pleased more than that if his sinner servant repents."

If, after knowing these verses and Traditions, someone still fails to seek Divine forgiveness and approbation by offering repentance for his sins through Taubah and resolving not to fall into error again he, emphatically, is most unfortunate.

Many people are inclined to take a most complacent attitude towards Taubah. They say, "We are healthy and strong, so what's the hurry? We will do Taubah before dying." Brothers! This is an extremely dangerous deception which the Devil practises on us. Deprived as he has himself of Divine Mercy and Beneficence and earned a permanent abode in the Hell, he wants us also to go his way. No one knows when death may strike. Thus, we should consider every

day to be the last day of our lives and lose no time in begging the forgiveness of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) if and when we have been guilty of an evil. This, alone, is the path of wisdom. It is stated candidly in the Holy Quraan that:

Allah accepts the repentance of those who do evil in ignorance, and repent soon afterwards; to them will Allah turn in mercy, for Allah is full of knowledge and wisdom. Of no effect is the repentance of those who continue to do evil, until death faces one of them, and he says, "Now have I repented indeed!" Nor of those who die rejecting faith: for them have We prepared a punishment most grievous.

(V : 17-18)

إِنَّمَا التَّوْبَةُ عَلَى اللَّهِ لِلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ السُّوءَ بِجَهَالَةٍ ثُمَّ يَتُوبُونَ مِن قَرِيبٍ فَأُولَٰئِكَ يَتُوبُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا وَلَيْسَتِ التَّوْبَةُ لِلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ السَّيِّئَاتِ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا حَضَرَ أَحَدَهُمُ الْمَوْتُ قَالَ إِنِّي تُبْتُ الْآنَ وَلَا الَّذِينَ يَمُوتُونَ وَهُمْ كُفَّارٌ أُولَٰئِكَ أَعْتَدْنَا لَهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا (النساء ١٧-١٨)

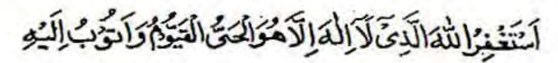
We should catch time by the forelock and realise the value of life that is left to us. We should not put off Taubah by a moment; we must not procrastinate. We ought to set about, at once, reforming our ways. Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) alone knows when death is going to make its call on us, and then, it may be too late. Who can tell whether, at that time, we will get the opportunity to offer Taubah or not?

Brothers! We all have seen people dying. The general experience is that a person dies in the same state in which he has led his life. It does not happen that a person may have spent all his days in folly and negligence and, then, suddenly repented and turned into a saint a day or two before his death. Hence, a man who wants to die in a state of Taqwaa, for him it is necessary to become pious in his lifetime. Then alone can he hope to die as a good Muslim, by the grace of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), and to be raised up with the faithful and the righteous in the Hereafter.

If after offering repentance for a sin a person may be guilty of the same sin again there is no need for him to feel so frustrated over it as to lose faith in Divine Mercifulness. He should offer Taubah quickly again, and if again he may break it, he should not hesitate in offering it once more even if it be a thousand times. Whenever he will repent with a sincere heart it is the promise of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) that He will accept his repentance and forgive him. The benevolence of the Lord, and His Paradise, is infinite.

Words of Tauba

From the foregoing it would have been clear that in words or language a person may offer Taubah Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) will listen and accept his penitence. But the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) has laid down certain specific phrases or prayers in this regard which he used to recite himself. These prayers, surely, are most auspicious, most worthy of His acceptance and most pleasing to Him. We are reproducing some of these here for you to learn by heart and recite for seeking divine forgiveness~



I beg the forgiveness of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) save Whom there is no God, the living, the Eternal. Unto Him do I turn penitent.

The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) has said, "Whoever will offer penitence to Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and implore His forgiveness through this Kalimah, Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) will forgive him even if he has fled of Jihad which is a most mortal sin in the sight of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)."

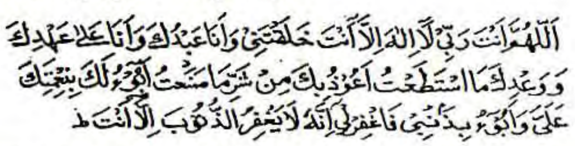
And again: "Whoever will recite this Kalimah thrice before going to sleep Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) will forgive his sins even though they may be as profuse as the foam of the sea."

Sometimes the sacred Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) used

to recite only أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللهَ (I implore the forgiveness of the Lord). It is a very brief phrase and we should try to cultivate the habit of repeating it every now and then.

Sayyid-il-Istighfaar

It is related that the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) once remarked that the following prayer was Sayyid-il-Istighfaar (the leader of all the prayer of Istighfaar).



O Allah ! Thou art my Lord. There is no God save thee. Thou art my Creator and I am Thy slave. I abide by Thy covenant and promise as best as I can. I seek refuge in Thee from the mischief of what I have wrought. I acknowledge unto Thee Thy favour which Thou hast bestowed upon me, I also confess my sins; so forgive me, for none forgiveth sins save Thee.

Says the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam):

"He who will offer repentance and beg the forgiveness of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) reciting this prayer with faith and sincerity during day-time then if he died on that day before nightfall, he shall go to Heaven, and he who will recite it at night, with faith and sincerity, and then if he died on that night, before day-break, he shall go to Heaven."

The three Kalimahs of Taubah we have mentioned above are quite easy to remember.

As a Tradition reads :

"Blessed, indeed, is the man in whose record the profusion of Taubah is written."

الختام

Epilogue

What has been stated in the twenty lessons of this small volume will, InshaaAllah, suffice for anyone for the attainment of Divine pleasure and paradise. It seems appropriate here to give a brief resume of the whole discussion before bringing the book to a close.

The first principle of Islam and the most essential prerequisite of deliverance and the attainments of paradise is that a man affirms his faith in the Kalimah of لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَّسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ After that, he should try to acquire knowledge of the tenets of Islam at least as far as it is necessary to know them in order to be a good Muslim. His constant endeavour should be to observe the Islamic teachings faithfully and to carry out sincerely the Divine commandments regarding the Rights of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) as well as the Rights of man and good social and moral behaviour. When there may occur a lapse on his part in respect of these matters he should feel genuinely sorry over it and repent to Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and seek His forgiveness. He should resolve honestly not to be guilty of the transgression again. If he has transgressed against a fellow being by violating his rights or doing him any other harm he should seek his pardon and make amends for his fault or misconduct or pay suitable compensation as the case my be.

In the same way, the effort of a Muslim should always be that the love of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and of His Apostle (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) and his Faith should be stronger in his heart than that of anyone or anything else in the world. He should remain steadfast in faith and waver not in the least form the path of duty to Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) whatever the circumstances are. He should also, as a matter of duty, take some part or another in the preaching and propagation of Islam. It is an act of outstanding virtue and merit and a most special legacy of the Prophets. In the present age, particularly, its value is

much greater than that of all other forms of prayers and worships (other than obligatory) and when a person devotes himself to it, his devotion to Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) and the Faith also develops and becomes stronger.

Among the other prayers, if possible, one should develop the habit of Tahajjud. Its auspiciousness is of the very highest.

One must always be on one's guard against sin, specially against the major sins, like adultery, stealing, falsehood, drink and dishonest in monetary affairs.

It is advisable to do some Zikr every day. In case it may not be possible to spare more time for it, one should recite at least Kalimah-i-Tamjid.

سُبْحَانَ اللهِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ وَلَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللهُ وَاللهُ اَكْبَرُ وَلَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ اِلَّا بِاللهِ

Or only سُبْحَانَ اللهِ وَبِحَمْدِهٖ and Istighfaar [1] and Durood Shareef [2], a hundred times each, morning and evening.

Time should also be set aside for the daily reading of the Holy Quraan. It should be done with due religious respect and reverence. After every obligatory Salaah and at bedtime the Tasbeehaat-i-Fatimah [3] may also be recited.

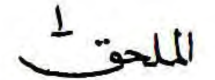
For those who aspire for more, the advice is to seek guidance from a spiritual mentor who may be worthy of it. The last thing to be said in this connection is that the company of true, pious and exalted devotees of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) and attachment and devotion to them is the very elixir of religious and spiritual existence. If this can fall to the lot of anyone all the rest will follow automatically.

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1. اَسْتَغْفِرُ اللهَ الَّذِىْ لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ الْحَىُّ الْقَيُّوْمُ وَاَتُوْبُ اِلَيْهِ
or only اَسْتَغْفِرُ اللهَ

2. Durood-i-Ibrahami or a brief one like اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدِ النَّبِىِّ الْاُمِّىِّ وَاٰلِهٖ

3. سُبْحَانَ اللهِ 33 times الْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ 33 times اَللهُ اَكْبَرُ 34 times.



APPENDIX

(I)

Forty Prayers from the Holy Quraan and the Traditions

Below we give a selection of forty prayers from the Holy Quraan and the Traditions.

(1)

الحمد لله رب العلمين ۝ الرحمن الرحيم ۝ ملك يوم الدين ۝ إياك نعبد وإياك نستعين ۝ اهدنا الصراط المستقيم ۝ صراط الذين أنعمت عليهم غير المغضوب عليهم ولا الضالين ۝ آمين (الفاتحة)

Praise be to Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), Lord of the World, the Compassionate, the Merciful, Owner of the Day of Judgement. Thee alone do we worship, and to Thee alone do we beg for help. Show us the straight path; the path of those whom Thou hast favoured; not the path (of those) who earn Thine anger, nor of those who go astray. Aameen !

(2)

ربنا آتنا في الدنيا حسنة وفي الآخرة حسنة وقنا عذاب النار (البقرة ٢٥٤)

Our Lord ! Give us good in this world and good in the hereafter, and save us from the torment of the Fire.

(3)

ربنا إننا آمنا فاغفر لنا ذنوبنا وقنا عذاب النار (سورة آل عمران ٢٤)

Our Lord ! We have, indeed, believed; forgive us, then, our sins, and save us from the agony of the Fire.

(4)

رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَإِسْرَافَنَا فِي أَمْرِنَا وَثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَنَا وَانْصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكٰفِرِينَ
(ال عمران ١٥٤)

O Lord! Forgive us our sins and anything we may have done that transgressed our duty; establish our feet firmly, and help us against the people that resisteth faith.

(5)

رَبَّنَا إِنَّنَا سَمِعْنَا مُنَادِيًا يُنَادِي لِلْإِيمَانِ أَنْ آمِنُوا بِرَبِّكُمْ فَآمَنَّا رَبَّنَا فَاغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَكَفِّرْ عَنَّا سَيِّئَاتِنَا وَتَوَفَّنَا مَعَ الْأَبْرَارِ رَبَّنَا وَآتِنَا مَا وَعَدْتَنَا عَلَىٰ رُسُلِكَ وَلَا تُخْزِنَا يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ إِنَّكَ لَا تُخْلِفُ الْمِيعَادَ (ال عمران ٢٠٢)

Our Lord ! We have heard the call of one calling us to Faith, "Believe ye in the Lord", and we have believed. Our Lord! forgive us our sins, blot out from us our inequities, and take to Thyself our souls in the company of the righteous. Our Lord! grant us what Thou didst promise unto us through Thine Apostle, and save us from shame on the Day of Judgement: for Thou never breakest promise.

(6)

رَبَّنَا ظَلَمْنَا أَنْفُسَنَا وَإِنْ لَمْ تَغْفِرْ لَنَا وَتَرْحَمْنَا لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخٰسِرِينَ

Our Lord ! We have wronged our souls; if Thou forgive us not and bestow not on us Thy mercy we shall certainly be at loss.

(7)

رَبَّنَا لَا تَجْعَلْنَا فِتْنَةً لِلْقَوْمِ الظّٰلِمِينَ وَنَجِّنَا بِرَحْمَتِكَ مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الْكٰفِرِينَ
(يونس ٩٤)

Our Lord ! Make us not a trial for those who practise oppression and deliver us by Thy mercy from those who reject Thee.

(8)

فَاطِرَ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ قف اَنْتَ وَلِيّٖ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْاٰخِرَةِ ۚ تَوَفَّنِيْ مُسْلِمًا وَّاَلْحِقْنِيْ بِالصّٰلِحِيْنَ ۝ (يوسف ع ١١)

Creator of the heavens and the earth ! Thou art my Protector in this world and the Hereafter. Take Thou my soul at death as one submitting to Thy Will (as a Muslim) and unite us with the righteous.

(9)

رَبِّ اجْعَلْنِيْ مُقِيْمَ الصَّلٰوةِ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِيْ رَبَّنَا وَتَقَبَّلْ دُعَآءِ ۝ رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لِيْ وَلِوَالِدَيَّ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ يَوْمَ يَقُوْمُ الْحِسَابُ ۝ (ابراهيم ع ٦)

O my Lord ! Make me one who establishes regular prayer, and also raise among my off-spring, O our Lord, and accept Thou my prayer : O our Lord ! Cover us with thy forgiveness, me, my parents and all Believers, on the Day that the Rockoning will be established.

(10)

رَبِّ ارْحَمْهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيٰنِيْ صَغِيْرًا (بنی اسرائیل ع ٣)

My Lord ! Bestow on my parents Thy mercy as they cherished me in my childhood.

(11)

رَبِّ زِدْنِيْ عِلْمًا (طٰهٰ ع ٦)

O my Lord ! Advance me in my knowledge.

(12)

رَبِّ اغْفِرْ وَارْحَمْ وَاَنْتَ خَيْرُ الرّٰحِمِيْنَ (المؤمنون ع ٦)

O my Lord ! Grant Thou forgiveness and mercy, for Thou art the Best of those who show, mercy !

(13)

رَبِّ أَوْزِعْنِي أَنْ أَشْكُرَ نِعْمَتَكَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيَّ وَعَلَىٰ وَالِدَيَّ وَأَنْ أَعْمَلَ
صَالِحًا تَرْضَاهُ وَأَصْلِحْ لِي فِي ذُرِّيَّتِي إِنِّي تُبْتُ إِلَيْكَ وَإِنِّي مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ ۝
(الاحقاف ٢)

O my Lord ! Grant me that I may be grateful for Thy favour which Thou hast bestowed upon me, and upon both my parents, and I may do righteous work such as Thou mayst approve; and be gracious to me in my issue. Truly have I turned to Thee and truly do I bow to Thee in Islam.

(14)

رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا وَلِإِخْوَانِنَا الَّذِينَ سَبَقُونَا بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلَا تَجْعَلْ فِي قُلُوبِنَا غِلًّا
لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ رَءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ ۝ (الحشر ١)

Our Lord ! Forgive us, and our brethren who came before us into the Faith, and leave not, in our hearts, I rancour (or sense of injury) against those who have believed. Our Lord ! Thou art, indeed, full of kindness, Most Merciful.

(15)

رَبَّنَا أَتْمِمْ لَنَا نُورَنَا وَاغْفِرْ لَنَا إِنَّكَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ۝

Our Lord ! Perfect our Light for us and grant us forgiveness: for Thou hast power over all things.

(16)

يَا حَيُّ يَا قَيُّومُ بِرَحْمَتِكَ أَسْتَغِيثُ أَصْلِحْ لِي شَأْنِي كُلَّهُ

O Thou Living, Eternal One ! Unto Thy Mercy do I appeal.

(17)

اَللّٰهُمَّ اَصْلِحْ دِيْنِيَ الَّذِيْ هُوَ عِصْمَةُ اَمْرِيْ وَاَصْلِحْ لِيْ دُنْيَايَ الَّتِيْ فِيْهَا
مَعَاشِيْ وَاَصْلِحْ لِيْ اٰخِرَتِيَ الَّتِيْ فِيْهَا مَعَادِيْ وَاجْعَلِ الْحَيٰوةَ زِيَادَةً لِّيْ
فِيْ كُلِّ خَيْرٍ وَّاجْعَلِ الْمَوْتَ رَاحَةً لِّيْ مِنْ كُلِّ شَرٍّ ۝

O Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! Set aright my faith which is the safeguard of all my affairs; set aright my world wherein is my living, set aright my Hereafter where to I have to return. Let life be unto me a source of advance in every kind of righteousness, and let death be to me a release from every kind of evil.

(18)

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّيْ اَسْئَلُكَ الْعَفْوَ وَالْعَافِيَةَ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْاٰخِرَةِ ۝

O Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! I beg of Thee forgiveness and peace in this world and the next.

(19)

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّيْ اَسْئَلُكَ الْهُدٰى وَالتُّقٰى وَالْعَفَافَ وَالْغِنٰى ۝

O Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! I beg of Thee guidance and modesty and righteousness and freedom from want.

(20)

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّيْ اَسْئَلُكَ رِزْقًا طَيِّبًا وَّعِلْمًا نَافِعًا وَّعَمَلًا مُّتَقَبَّلًا

O Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! I beg of Thee sustenance that is clean, knowledge that is useful, and conduct that is acceptable to Thee.

(21)

اَللّٰهُمَّ افْتَحْ لَنَا اَبْوَابَ رَحْمَتِكَ وَسَهِّلْ لَنَا اَبْوَابَ رِزْقِكَ

O Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! Open the doors of Mercy for us and make easy for us the doors of sustenance.

(22)

اَللّٰهُمَّ اكْفِنِيْ بِحَلَالِكَ عَنْ حَرَامِكَ وَاَغْنِنِيْ بِفَضْلِكَ عَمَّنْ سِوَاكَ

O Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! Let Thy lawful sustenance suffice for me against unlawful sustenance, and let me be, by Thy Grace, dependent on no besides Thee.

(23)

اَللّٰهُمَّ وَفِّقْنِيْ لِمَا تُحِبُّ وَتَرْضٰى وَاجْعَلْ اٰخِرَتِيْ خَيْرًا مِّنَ الْاُوْلٰى

O Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! Let it be my good fortune to do things that are pleasing to Thee and make the Hereafter better for me than this world.

(24)

اَللّٰهُمَّ اَلْهِمْنِيْ رُشْدِيْ وَقِنِيْ شَرَّ نَفْسِيْ

O Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! Guide me to the right path, to the path of truth and piety, and save me from the mischief of my own self.

(25)

اَللّٰهُمَّ اَعِنِّيْ عَلٰى ذِكْرِكَ وَشُكْرِكَ وَحُسْنِ عِبَادَتِكَ

O Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! Help me in Thy rememberance and in being thankful to Thee and in good worship.

(26)

يَا مُقَلِّبَ الْقُلُوْبِ ثَبِّتْ قَلْبِيْ عَلٰى دِيْنِكَ

O Thou who controlleth the hearts ! Keep my heart steadfast in Thy faith.

(27)

اَللّٰهُمَّ اَحْيِنِيْ مُسْلِمًا وَّاَمِتْنِيْ مُسْلِمًا

O Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! Grant me that I may live as a Muslim and die as a Muslim.

(28)

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّيْ اَسْئَلُكَ حُبَّكَ وَحُبَّ مَنْ يُّحِبُّكَ وَحُبَّ عَمَلٍ يُّقَرِّبُ اِلٰى حُبِّكَ اَللّٰهُمَّ
اجْعَلْ حُبَّكَ اَحَبَّ اِلَيَّ مِنْ نَّفْسِيْ وَمِنْ اَهْلِيْ وَمِنَ الْمَآءِ الْبَارِدِ

O Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! I beg of Thee Thy love and the love of him who loveth Thee and the conduct that will enable me to attain Thy love. O Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! Let Thy love be dearer to me than myself, my wealth, mine household and water that is cold.

(29)

اَللّٰهُمَّ غَشِّنِيْ بِرَحْمَتِكَ وَجَنِّبْنِيْ عَذَابَكَ

O Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! Cover me with thy Mercy and save me from Thy Punishment.

(30)

اَللّٰهُمَّ ثَبِّتْ قَدَمَيَّ يَوْمَ تَزِلُّ فِيْهِ الْاَقْدَامُ

O Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! Keep me steadfast when feet begin to waver.

(31)

اَللّٰهُمَّ حَاسِبْنِي حِسَابًا يَسِيرًا

O Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! Judge me leniently on the Day of Judgement.

(32)

رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي خَطِيئَتِي يَوْمَ الدِّينِ

O Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! Forgive me my sins on Day of Requital.

(33)

اَللّٰهُمَّ قِنِي عَذَابَكَ يَوْمَ تَبْعَثُ عِبَادَكَ

O Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! Save me from Thy Chastisement on the Day thou wilt raise up Thy slaves.

(34)

اَللّٰهُمَّ إِنَّ مَغْفِرَتَكَ أَوْسَعُ مِنْ ذُنُوبِي وَرَحْمَتَكَ أَرْجَى عِنْدِي مِنْ عَمَلِي

O Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! Thy forgiveness is wider than mine inequities and I have better hope in Thy Mercy than in my conduct.

(35)

اَللّٰهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ رِضَاكَ وَالْجَنَّةَ وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ غَضَبِكَ وَالنَّارِ

O Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! I beg of Thee Thy good pleasure and the Garden (i.e., paradise). I also beg of Thee to spare me out of Thy Mercy the Punishment of Frie.

(36)

اَللّٰهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِرِضَاكَ مِنْ سَخَطِكَ وَبِمُعَافَاتِكَ مِنْ عُقُوبَتِكَ وَأَعُوذُ
بِكَ مِنْكَ لَا أُحْصِي ثَنَاءً عَلَيْكَ أَنْتَ كَمَا أَثْنَيْتَ عَلَى نَفْسِكَ

O Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! I seek refuge in Thy good pleasure from Thy displeasure, and Thy forgiveness from Thy retribution; and I seek refuge in Thee from Thee. Unable am I to reckon Thy Praise which is Thine. Thou art, indeed, as Thou hast described Thyself.

(37)

اَللّٰهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِيْ وَارْحَمْنِيْ وَتُبْ عَلَيَّ اِنَّكَ اَنْتَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيْمُ

O Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! Forgive me; be kind to me, have mercy on me. Verily Thou art Most Kind, Most Merciful.

(38)

اَللّٰهُمَّ اَنْتَ رَبِّيْ لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّآ اَنْتَ خَلَقْتَنِيْ وَاَنَا عَبْدُكَ وَاَنَا عَلٰى عَهْدِكَ وَ
وَعْدِكَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُ اَعُوْذُ بِكَ مِنْ شَرِّ مَا صَنَعْتُ اَبُوْءُ لَكَ بِنِعْمَتِكَ
عَلَيَّ وَاَبُوْءُ بِذَنْبِيْ فَاغْفِرْ لِيْ ذُنُوْبِيْ اِنَّهٗ لَا يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوْبَ اِلَّآ اَنْتَ ۔

O Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! Thou art my Lord. There is no god save Thee. Thou hast created me and I am Thy slave. And I abide by Thy Covenant and Promise as best as I can. I seek refuge in Thee from the mischief of what I have wrought. I acknowledge unto Thee Thy favour which Thou hast bestowed upon me. I Confess also my inequity: so, forgive me, for none forgiveth sins save Thee.

(39)

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّيْ اَعُوْذُ بِكَ مِنْ شَرِّ سَمْعِيْ وَمِنْ شَرِّ بَصَرِيْ وَمِنْ شَرِّ لِسَانِيْ وَمِنْ شَرِّ
قَلْبِيْ وَمِنْ شَرِّ مَنِيِّيْ وَاَعُوْذُ بِكَ مِنْ عَذَابِ جَهَنَّمَ وَمِنْ عَذَابِ الْقَبْرِ
وَمِنْ فِتْنَةِ الْمَسِيْحِ الدَّجَّالِ وَاَعُوْذُ بِكَ مِنْ فِتْنَةِ الْمَحْيَا وَالْمَمَاتِ

O Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! I seek refuge in Thee from the mischief of my ears, and from the mischief of my eyes, and from the mischief of my tongue, and from the mischief of my heart, and from the mischief of my carnal desires, and I seek refuge in Thee from the

punishment of Hell, and from the punishment of the grave, and from the calamity of Dajjaal, and I seek refuge in Thee from the trials and temptations of life and death.

(40)

اللهم إني أسألك من خير ما سألك منه نبيك محمد (صلى الله عليه وسلم)
وأعوذ بك من شر ما استعاذك منه نبيك محمد (صلى الله عليه وسلم)

O Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! I beg of Thee all the good things that (Prophet) Mohammad (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) had begged of Thee, and I seek Thy refuge from all the evils from which (Prophet) Mohammad (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) had sought refuge in Thee.

(41)

اللهم صل على محمد وعلى آل محمد كما صليت على إبراهيم وعلى آل إبراهيم
إنك حميد مجيد اللهم بارك على محمد وعلى آل محمد كما باركت على إبراهيم
وعلى آل إبراهيم إنك حميد مجيد اللهم أنزله المقعد المقرب عندك
يوم القيامة وأبلغه الوسيلة والدرجة وابعثه مقاما محمودا الذي
وعدته وارزقنا يوم القيامة إنك لا تخلف الميعاد

O Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! Magnify Mohammad (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) and his posterity and followers as Thou hast magnified Abraham and his posterity and followers; verily, Thou art the Praiseworthy, the Majestic. O Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! Bless Mohammad (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) and his posterity and followers as Thou hast blest Abraham and his posterity and followers; verily, Thou art the Praiseworthy, the Majestic. O Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! Send him down on the Day of Judgement into the place of special nearness unto Thee and elevate him to places of honour and intercession and grant him that place of choicest favour and worthiness which Thou hast promised for him and bless us with his intercession on the Day of Recompense: for Thou never breakest Thy promise.

الملحق ٢

APPENDIX

(II)

Prayers for particular occasions

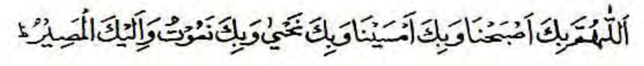
Many prayers for specific occasions have also been taught to us by the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam). We are reproducing some of them here that are easy to learn and can be made use of by us in our daily life. They should be learnt by heart and recited habitually at moments for which they are indicated.

1. At day-break

اللهم بك أمسينا وبك أصبحنا وبك نحيى وبك نموت وإليك النشور

O Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! With Thy help do we enter upon the morning and with Thy help do we enter upon the evening: with Thy help do we live and with thy help do we die: and unto Thee shall be the Resurrection.

2. When evenign sets in



O Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! With Thy help do we enter upon the evening and with Thy help do we enter upon the morning: with Thy help do we live and with Thy help do we die: and unto Thee shall be the Resurrection

3. On retiring to bed

اَللّٰهُمَّ بِاسْمِكَ اَمُوْتُ وَاَحْيَا

O Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! In Thy name do we die and we become alive.

4. On rising up in the morning

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ الَّذِىْ اَحْيَانِىْ بَعْدَ مَآ اَمَاتَنِىْ وَاِلَيْهِ النُّشُوْرُ

Praise be to Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) who restored us unto life, having caused to die, and Him shall be the Resurrection.

5. Before entering the lavatory

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّىْٓ اَعُوْذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْخُبُثِ وَالْخَبَآئِثِ

O Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! I seek refuge in Thee from the wicked devils (both) male and female.

6. On coming out of the lavatory

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ الَّذِىْٓ اَذْهَبَ عَنِّى الْاَذٰى وَعَافَانِىْ

Praise be to Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa) who relieved me of faeces and gave health.

7. While performing the Wudhu

اَللّٰهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِىْ ذَنْبِىْ وَوَسِّعْ لِىْ فِىْ دَارِىْ وَبَارِكْ لِىْ فِىْ رِزْقِىْ

O Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! forgive me my sins and expand for me my household and grant auspiciousness and prosperity to my sustenance.

8. When the Wudhu is finished

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَّآ إِلٰهَ إِلَّا اللّٰهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيْكَ لَهُ وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَ رَسُوْلُهُ اَللّٰهُمَّ اجْعَلْنِيْ مِنَ التَّوَّابِيْنَ وَاجْعَلْنِيْ مِنَ الْمُتَطَهِّرِيْنَ ۔

I bear witness that there is no god except Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa). He is alone: He hath no partner. And I bear witness that Mohammad (Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam) is His slave and His Messenger. O Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! Make me among those who repent and among those who remain clean.

9. On entering the mosque

رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِيْ وَافْتَحْ لِيْ أَبْوَابَ رَحْمَتِكَ

O Lord ! forgive me my sins and open unto me the doors of Thy Bounty.

10. On coming out of the mosque

رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِيْ وَافْتَحْ لِيْ أَبْوَابَ فَضْلِكَ

O Lord ! forgive me my sins and open unto me the gates of Thy Mercy.

11. Before commencing to eat

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ وَعَلٰى بَرَكَةِ اللّٰهِ

In the name of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! and upon the blessing of the Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa).

12. At the end of a meal

الْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ الَّذِيْ أَطْعَمَنَا وَسَقَانَا وَجَعَلَنَا مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِيْنَ

Praise be to Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! who fed us and gave us drink and raised us up as Muslims.

13. When dining at someone's place

اَللّٰهُمَّ أَطْعِمْ مَنْ أَطْعَمَنِيْ وَاسْقِ مَنْ سَقَانِيْ

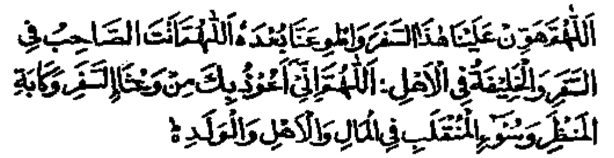
O Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! feed him who fed me and give him drink who gave me to drink.

14. When riding or boarding on a vehicle

سُبْحَانَ الَّذِيْ سَخَّرَ لَنَا هٰذَا وَمَا كُنَّا لَهُ مُقْرِنِيْنَ وَإِنَّا إِلٰى رَبِّنَا لَمُنْقَلِبُوْنَ (الزخرف)

Glory be to Him who hath subjugated it to us though we were unable to subdue it. Behold, we are assuredly to return unto the Lord.

15. When setting forth on a journey



اَللّٰهُمَّ هَوِّنْ عَلَيْنَا هٰذَا السَّفَرَ وَاطْوِ عَنَّا بُعْدَهُ اَللّٰهُمَّ أَنْتَ الصَّاحِبُ فِي السَّفَرِ وَالْخَلِيْفَةُ فِي الْأَهْلِ اَللّٰهُمَّ إِنِّيْ أَعُوْذُ بِكَ مِنْ وَعْثَاءِ السَّفَرِ وَكَآبَةِ الْمَنْظَرِ وَسُوْءِ الْمُنْقَلَبِ فِي الْمَالِ وَالْأَهْلِ وَالْوَلَدِ

O Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! Make this journey of ours easy for us and roll up for us the distance thereof: O Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! Thou art our companion in the journey and the Caretaker of our households when we are away. O Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! I seek refuge in Thee from the toil of the journey and from beholding a sad sight and a bad reverse in my fortunes and on my return.

16. On returning home from a journey

آيِبُوْنَ تَائِبُوْنَ عَابِدُوْنَ لِرَبِّنَا حَامِدُوْنَ

We return unto Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), penitents, adorers and worshippers of the Lord.

17. When bidding farewell to anyone

أَسْتَوْدِعُ اللّٰهَ دِيْنَكَ وَأَمَانَتَكَ وَخَوَاتِيْمَ أَعْمَالِكَ

I place thee in the hands of Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa), and thy things that need protection and the end of thy deeds.

18. On seeing anyone in distress

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ الَّذِيْ عَافَانِيْ مِمَّا ابْتَلَاكَ بِهٖ وَفَضَّلَنِيْ عَلٰى كَثِيْرٍ مِّمَّنْ خَلَقَ تَفْضِيْلًا

Praise be to Lord who saved me from that with which He hath afflicted thee, and made me better than many of His creatures (purely out of His Mercy. I claim no credit for it).

19. On entering a town

اَللّٰهُمَّ بَارِكْ لَنَا فِيْهَا

O Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! Bless us in this town (and make it for us auspicious.)

20. When rising from a company


سُبْحَانَكَ اللّٰهُمَّ وَبِحَمْدِكَ لَا إِلٰهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ أَسْتَغْفِرُكَ وَأَتُوْبُ إِلَيْكَ ط

O Allah (Subhaanahu Wata'aalaa)! Glory be to Thee, I celebrate Thy praises; There is no Lord save Thee, I beg Thy forgiveness and I repent.



ریسرچ اینڈ رجسٹریشن آفیسر اوقاف

تصدیق نامہ

کتاب "اسلام کیا ہے" (انگریزی) میں درج
قرآنی آیات کو چیک کیا گیا ——

تصدیق کی جاتی ہے کہ اس کتاب میں درج
قرآنی آیات کے متن میں کسی قسم کی کمی بیشی
یا اعراب کی غلطی نہیں ہے ——

واللہ اعلم

[illegible]

رجسٹرڈ [illegible] برائے قرآن کریم

7-1-2001